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EVERY WEEK

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**MP names Editor of Sunday Telegraph as MI6 agent**



Dominic Lawson: denial

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR  
A Labour MP used parliamentary privilege yesterday to name Dominic Lawson, Editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, as the newspaperman alleged to have been in the pay of MI6.

Brian Sedgemore, MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch, called for an investigation into whether Mr Lawson had been recruited by the Secret Intelligence Service.  
Mr Lawson, 41, who has been the Editor of the *Sunday Telegraph* since 1995, issued a statement yesterday in which he said: "I am not and never

have been an agent either paid or unpaid of MI6, or of any other government agency."  
Mr Sedgemore's comments came in a short debate ahead of the Christmas break today as he called for an early pledge on the Government's promise to introduce a Freedom of Information Act.  
The allegation that a national newspaper editor was a paid asset of MI6 has been among a number of claims reportedly made by Richard Tomlinson, the former MI6 officer dismissed in 1995.  
Mr Tomlinson, who subsequently served six months in prison for breaching the Official

Secrets Act, did not name the editor.  
In the Commons, Mr Sedgemore said: "I would hope we would have some time between now and Christmas to look at the claim that Dominic Lawson, the Editor of the *Sunday Telegraph*, has been recruited as a paid MI6 agent."  
It would be very damaging for the press if it were true. I've no idea whether it is true but it surely is something we should look at."  
The *Times* discovered independently recently which editor was being referred to as an alleged MI6 asset, and last Saturday ran a report on the allegations, without naming him. The *Times* also reported that Jeff Randall, the Editor of *Sunday Business*, had been visited by one of MI6's directors last week after it had run an article which also mentioned the allegation about an editor.  
Mr Randall was asked to confirm that the information in the article had come from an interview with Mr Tomlinson. Mr Randall refused to help.  
Subsequently it emerged that Scotland Yard had begun a new investigation into whether Mr Tomlinson had committed a further breach of the Official Secrets Act.  
The claim that MI6 had recruited an editor has been firmly denied by Whitehall sources.

The allegation centres on the time when Mr Lawson was the Editor of the *Spectator* between 1990 and 1995.  
During Mr Lawson's editorship of the magazine, a number of articles appeared under a pseudonym.  
Two articles appeared in 1992 under the name of Kenneth Roberts, said to be working with the United Nations in Bosnia. At the end of the articles which accused UN peacekeepers in Bosnia of being pro-Serb, there was a note that the author's real identity had been concealed at his request.  
Mr Lawson was Editor  
Continued on page 2, col 5

**THE TIMES**  
Ex-MI6 officer fears extradition



"The name's Lawson... Dominic Lawson"

**Britain and US 'primed for action'**

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE EDITOR, AND PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

AMERICAN and British forces were on full alert last night to begin immediate airstrikes on Iraq, after a report by the head of the United Nations arms inspectors accused Baghdad of persistent obstruction.  
RAF Tornados in Kuwait were reported to be "primed for action" and American bombers and warships armed with cruise missiles were awaiting the order from President Clinton to launch attacks.  
President Saddam Hussein issued a warning that Iraq would fight "to the last man" as it became clear in Baghdad that airstrikes were imminent. The first sign was when UN arms inspectors began leaving the Iraqi capital in buses. The Foreign Office in London also warned British nationals in Iraq to leave.  
The expected decision to launch bombing raids even affected the imminent impeachment proceedings against Mr Clinton, who returned from his Middle East trip to be faced with two dramatic events.  
With the House of Representatives due to vote on impeachment today, there were early indications that the process would be delayed so that the President could focus on the Iraqi crisis. Congress was also anxious to ensure that the historic vote on impeachment should not be sidelined by a President making strategic decisions as the commander-in-chief of American military forces.  
Last night there was a tenta-

five agreement between the Republicans and Democrats that the impeachment proceedings would be postponed if airstrikes went ahead.  
More than 400 American cruise missiles were ready to be launched and at least 200 US aircraft were in position in the Gulf region to start comprehensive airstrikes, expected to last several days. They included 15 B52 bombers on the Indian Ocean island of Diego Garcia.  
The US aircraft carrier, *USS Enterprise*, in the Gulf, will be joined by a second carrier, by the end of the week which will add another 70 aircraft available for attacks on Iraq.  
The aircrews of the RAF's 12 Tornado GR1 bombers at Ali al-Salem in Kuwait were expected to play a key part in the bombing campaign.  
Tony Blair, who told the Commons that Saddam had broken all his agreements with the UN, had already cleared the ground for airstrikes after a meeting with General Sir Charles Guthrie, the Chief of the Defence Staff, and John Morris QC, the Attorney-General, on Tuesday.  
Ministry of Defence sources said that once Mr Blair had given his executive order authorising British forces to take part in the airstrikes, a signal would be sent by the Permanent Joint Forces headquarters at Northwood, west London, to Group Captain Bob Burroughs, who recently took

over as commander of the Tornados detachment in Kuwait.  
After a lunchtime telephone conversation with Mr Clinton, the Prime Minister told the Commons that the allies had the legal authority they needed to launch airstrikes. Without saying that they would happen, Mr Blair nevertheless left most MPs with the impression that they were inevitable.  
William Hague offered the Conservative party's full support for the use of military action in the days ahead "provided it has clear and achievable objectives".  
When Tony Benn claimed that bombing would be "illegal in international law" the Prime Minister countered: "Given Iraq's manifest failure to co-operate over the last month, I am quite satisfied that if we should choose to use force, we have the necessary legal authority to do so."  
He said the report by Richard Butler, the chief weapons inspector, listed in clear terms the "obstacles placed in the way of the weapons inspectors - the delays, the deceit, the refusal to provide documents, the restrictions on inspections."  
He added: "Nobody who reads that report can seriously doubt its conclusions that UNSCOM is unable to carry out its job properly. Indeed the report states that there are greater restrictions now than previously."  
Mr Blair told the Commons a clear assurance had been given



US Navy technicians checking aircraft on the flight deck of the aircraft carrier *USS Enterprise*, which will be joined in the Gulf by another carrier

by Tariq Aziz, the Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister, on November 14 that Iraq would co-operate fully and unconditionally with the UN inspectors. "That promise is clearly now broken," he said.  
Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, was holding talks with his counterparts in the US, the European Union and some of the key allies in the Gulf last night.  
The preparation for air raids was a rerun of last month's drama when massive strikes were authorised by Mr Clinton and Mr Blair, only for the decision to be cancelled at the last moment when Saddam said he would co-operate

with UN arms inspectors. However, the report by Mr Butler said that Iraq had continued to obstruct his inspectors at every opportunity.  
Mr Cook said on Sky Television: "The report we have received from the inspectors today makes it clear that Saddam has invented new restrictions, he has made life more difficult for them and they have had to conclude that they cannot do their important work of stopping him from developing chemical and biological weapons with which he could terrorise the region."  
Having warned Saddam that failure to co-operate this time would lead to airstrikes

without warning, the US and Britain needed no more evidence to convince them that military action was the only step left.  
Reports that the imminent start of Ramadan, the month of fasting in the Muslim world, might affect American and British determination to punish Saddam, were largely dismissed both in Washington and London. Ramadan, which starts when two Muslim religious leaders see the full moon rising over Mecca, is expected on Saturday.  
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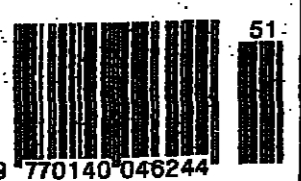
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**Agnes is odds-on to get a better degree than Alison**

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, SOCIAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

UNIVERSITY students with old-fashioned names such as Doris or Norman do better in their examinations than those with more "attractive", popular names such as Alison or John, new research shows.  
Dr Philip Erwin, a psychologist at Vene University College Northampton, said those with unpopular names could expect to achieve marks on average 3 per cent higher than students with fashionable names. "It may sound a small difference. But in a university degree it could mean the difference between a 2/1 and 2/2 or a 2/1 and a first," he said.  
Female names which could be considered "unattractive" include Doris, Ethel, Agnes, Pauline and Gillian. "Attractive" names included Emma, Charlotte, Alison and Sarah. With men, the differentiation is less clear. "Ugly" names include Amos and Harold, while "nice" names include Stephen and Andrew.  
Dr Erwin's research files in

the face of studies suggesting that positively evaluated first names are usually associated with more positive outcomes for individuals. His findings are based on a survey of 68 second-year psychology students at a British university. Names were rated for attractiveness, based largely on their popularity among a panel of 20 volunteers. The two groups were then separately compared with marks given to exam papers (which carried no names) and with course work (carrying student names). Students with "attractive" names scored on average 56 per cent; those with "unattractive" names had an average of nearly 60 per cent.  
The explanation appears to be that people with unusual old-fashioned names learn to adapt to the extra attention their name brings, becoming more resourceful. "It toughens them up and spurs them on to higher levels of achievement than might otherwise have

been the case." Dr Erwin added, however, that not every Norman or Doris is likely to become an Einstein. Having an "unattractive" name can undoubtedly prove a handicap, particularly at school, where it can lead to ridicule and bullying, but "might help you become more humorous and develop a stronger personality".  
Those who get as far as university were far more likely to be the self-confident show-offs than the crumbly ones, making those with "unattractive" names a tougher and more resilient group as a whole.  
Dr Erwin's advice to parents is to go for a fairly "attractive" name to avoid the child being bullied. However, he cautioned against extremely popular "celebrity" names, as their perceived attraction may be short-lived.  
"The best thing is to give a child two or three names and then if they don't like the one they have, at least they can change it."

**Cooper KO'd by snake bite**

By ROBIN YOUNG

HENRY COOPER, the former heavyweight boxing champion, has been knocked off his feet after being bitten by a snake while playing golf. He faces Christmas in hospital to treat the ankle injury after a nip from an adder on the course in Buckinghamshire.  
The bite has ulcerated and it caused the 64-year-old star to miss the *BBC Sports Review*

Of *The Year* earlier this week. "I have to get up to exercise it every quarter of an hour. Everybody would have been saying 'look at him, he's trying to get attention'."  
He added: "I've got to spend ten to 14 days with my leg up in the air in a sling. I get quite busy after Christmas and they were the only 15 or 16 days I had clear over Christmas."  
Mr Cooper was playing in a charity match when bitten. "I went to help a friend find his ball. I didn't take much notice of it at the time. I'd always thought that a snakebite knocks you for six but I felt well. I just put some antiseptic on it and carried on playing."  
"But after three or four days it came up and looked like a boil. It got worse and started giving me a lot of pain. It must have been a young 'un because the venom wasn't very strong."  
Adders, Britain's only native poisonous snake, usually become inactive in winter.



Henry Cooper: played on despite snake in grass

# A question of misunderstanding pays dividends for Blair

Halfway through a bewildering exchange between William Hague and Tony Blair yesterday, something dawned on me which explained everything. The Prime Minister hadn't the least idea what Mr Hague was talking about.

Once you understood this, all became clear. There was no longer any need to try to make sense of the failure of Mr Blair's answers to mesh with the Opposition Leader's questions. For all the difference it made, William might as well have consulted Ffion

and asked his question in Welsh.

Hague chose as his subject a topic on which Paddy Ashdown has already tackled Blair: the proposed removal of tax credit on share dividends from pensioners too poor to pay tax.

This is now to go ahead. When the Liberal Democrat Leader raised the problem last week, he had asked the Prime Minister for a final decision. In reply Mr Blair had promised it would be announced "as soon as possible". He had said nothing

about the issue itself. In retrospect it looks likely that this was because he did not know what Mr Ashdown meant.

For when Hague asked about it yesterday, Blair seemed to flounder. The Prime Minister began recommending the new "second pension" announced by the Social Security Secretary the previous afternoon. Interesting, but hardly germane. At the Opposition Dispatch box Hague persisted, but from over the way came something relevant of the Marie Celeste lights on nobody at home.



**MATTHEW PARRIS**  
POLITICAL SKETCH

"Lots of people", said Blair, were going to get the chance of a good pension scheme.

No doubt — but what of Hague's question, which was not about pension schemes at all? We had heard "no rational justification" from the Prime Minister for removing dividend tax credits. complained Hague. But in fact it was worse than that: we had heard nothing about dividend tax credits at all.

It was then it struck me that this could be because Mr Blair did not know what dividend tax credits were. The impression grew as, brow furrowed, Blair launched into a prepared précis of yesterday's statement on pensions. Again Hague complained he had heard no answer on dividend

credits. "Why not think again?" Blair replied that "our proposals are better" than Tory ideas. Then he launched into an attack on the mis-selling of pensions under the last government. Labour cheered nervously.

Having searched Hansard in vain for evidence that questioned by Ashdown eight days ago, Blair actually knew what Ashdown meant, we must now study yesterday's Hansard to confirm that there is no evidence he has found out since; but that was the impression. If, as we suspect, Mr

Blair was just winging it, perhaps Hague should try trapping him, fifteen Wednesdays on from yesterday.

"Will the Prime Minister come clean and admit to the House that the roll-over stock clawback indemnity relief on second-issue debentures extended to Welsh hill-farmers in lieu of the barren ewe suckler-drawn, now withdrawn, are just another vicious attack on our already hard-pressed farmers?" Mr Hague might ask.

After flicking desperately through his notes, face

screwed up with vexation, Blair would rise, grin and, slapping the air, declare: "Look, y'know, that comes, er, pretty rich from the Rt Hon Gentleman whose government wrecked British agriculture by failing to tackle BSE. My Rt Hon friend the Minister of Agriculture has made a brave attempt to resolve a complex and difficult issue, but all Hon Members opposite can do is whine and carp." Government MPs would cheer.

And Hague would rise: "April Fool!"

## Best nurses to be rewarded with more pay

By PHILIP WEBSTER, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Government will today promise a full-scale reform of the health service pay system that will include better salaries for nurses based on their performance, skills and responsibilities.

It will pledge to break down the barriers that have held back the salaries of nurses regardless of their ability and experience, discouraged them from staying in their jobs, and forced them to move into management as the only way of improving their career prospects.

The present system does not reward staff for taking on more responsibility. Nurses receive automatic increases which often take them up to the ceiling for their grades. The Government intends to change the focus away from status and job labels and reward staff instead for their skills and what they do for patients.

However, it will insist that the reforms, to take place in

2000 and 2001 and involving substantial extra spending by the Government, will depend on health service staff accepting "affordable" pay settlements in the coming year. It says that it wants a "culture of success" in the NHS where performance is properly rewarded.

The plans follow Tony Blair's promise to raise the status and morale of nursing by creating new "consultant nurses" — quickly dubbed as "super nurses."

In a letter to the nurses' pay review body, which is now considering its recommendations for next year, Alan Milburn, the Health Minister, says that the 1999 pay round will have an important bearing on the reform plans. "Our plans depend on having enough financial headroom for change," he says in the letter, obtained by *The Times*.

It is widely expected that the review body will make above-

inflation recommendations when it reports to ministers late in January because of the need to recruit and retain many more nurses.

There have been strong indications that the Government will not stage this year's awards for the same reasons and that nurses are likely to do better than doctors.

However, Mr Milburn's letter to Clive Booth, chairman of the review body, is clearly designed to hold out the prospect of better rewards in the later years of this Parliament provided a "reasonable" deal is done for 1999.

The overall aim will be to enable nurses to earn far more than the £26,000 maximum they can receive at the moment before they have to move into management to better their prospects.

Mr Milburn proposes a simpler, modernised national pay system but with flexibility built in for local managers.



Jennifer Flowers, who claimed she had an affair with President Clinton, arriving in London yesterday to promote her new singing career

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## Lawson

Continued from page 1 when the magazine ran a scoop that Richard Gott, literary editor of *The Guardian*, was being paid by the KGB.

The article, published on December 10, 1994, as the Conservative Government struggled to shrug off a series of allegations of sleaze made by *The Guardian*, claimed Mr Gott had been recruited by the KGB in the late seventies. Mr Gott who had also been a leader writer, foreign correspondent and features editor of *The Guardian*, subsequently resigned, admitting that the Russians had paid for trips to Vienna, Athens and Nicosia "to meet their man" but he denied ever receiving money from the KGB. This, Mr Gott claimed, was accepted by M16 when they interviewed him.

Whitehall sources have denied any suggestion that the *Spectator* or any other newspaper had provided cover for intelligence officers to work abroad, using national press cards. They said M16 prohibited the use of journalistic cover for operations abroad.

The allegation that an editor worked for M16 first appeared on an internet website in Geneva, allegedly following an interview between two Swiss journalists and Mr Tomlinson.

All newspapers are covered by a High Court injunction not to report any allegations by Mr Tomlinson that are not already in the public domain.

Jeremy Deedes, managing director of *The Daily Telegraph*, said: "It is a terrible slur against a chap to think that a journalist could keep his mouth shut for more than five minutes on anything of importance."

Neither Mr Lawson, nor his proprietor, Conrad Black, chairman of the Telegraph Group would add to the Editor's statement.

## Haughey is let off £2m bill for unpaid tax

By AUDREY MAGEE, IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

UPROAR erupted in the Irish Parliament yesterday when it emerged that a £2 million tax claim against Charles Haughey, the discredited former Irish Prime Minister, has been wiped out.

Mr Haughey was billed for about £2 million after a tribunal last year found that he had received £2.3 million in secret and untaxed payments from Ben Dunne, a supermarket magnate. Mr Haughey admitted receiving the money but has now successfully appealed against paying the £2 million bill for unpaid tax, penalties and interest.

Ruziri Quinn, the leader of the opposition Labour Party, said that it was "simply incomprehensible" that Mr Haughey should be let off the hook despite admitting to receiving the money.

The House was further enraged when it emerged that Roman Kelly, the appeals commissioner who dismissed Mr Haughey's bill, is a brother-in-law of Bertie Ahern, the current Prime Minister and former protégé of Mr Haughey. Mr Ahern denied any involvement in the affair.

Mr Kelly did not give any reason for his decision but it is believed that he criticised the Revenue Commissioners for failing to properly prove that Mr Haughey received the money from Mr Dunne, despite the former Prime Minister's admission to the tribunal in July 1997.

Mr Haughey told the inquiry, chaired by a High

## Let the criminals talk, says Irvine

By RUSSELL JENKINS

THE Lord Chancellor has revealed that he is opposed to drafting legislation to outlaw criminals from profiting from their crimes by selling their stories. Lord Irvine of Lairg said that although he finds the prospect "extremely distasteful", on balance he favours freedom of expression. There may be a public interest in adding to the total of human knowledge about such crimes, he insisted.

His comments threaten to reopen the row that erupted in April following Gitta Sereny's book *Cries Unheard* in which the child-killer Mary Bell was paid £10,000 to talk about her life. Critics on Merseyside interpreted them as opening the way for the killers of James Bulger to sell their stories on their release. Denise Ferguson, the toddler's mother, said she was "absolutely disgusted".

The Lord Chancellor's position, clarified during a Newspaper Conference lunch with regional correspondents on Friday, is likely to cause dismay at Downing Street and the Home Office. The Prime Minister has said such profiling is "inherently repugnant".

Lord Irvine said that any attempts to stop criminals profiting must be balanced against the need to preserve freedom of speech. He is quoted in the *Liverpool Echo* saying: "I obviously do not find it attractive that somebody can earn money from giving an account of a criminal activity. But I cannot bring myself to prohibit it because of the public interest in knowing about these things."



Haughey: he admitted receiving £1.3m in 1997

## Doctors defy NHS ban on Viagra

By IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

DOCTORS have started to prescribe the impotence drug Viagra to National Health Service patients in defiance of a government ban. They have told Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, that any guidelines he issues now on when it can be used will be "almost irrelevant".

On September 14, when Viagra was licensed, Mr Dobson ordered NHS doctors not to prescribe it until experts had drawn up guidelines on treatment. The Health Secretary was apparently reacting to reports that the drug could cost the NHS up to £1 billion a year if it was prescribed to every impotent man.

Since then there has been no hint from Mr Dobson about the guidelines while doctors have come under increasing pressure to be given it by patients. Because it is licensed it can be prescribed privately, but an NHS doctor cannot issue a private prescription to his NHS patient.

The blue triangular tablets cost the NHS £4.84 each and a doctor is expected to prescribe a typical patient two doses a week.

The only way an NHS patient can get Viagra is by going to a doctor he does not know and paying for a private prescription, with pills costing from £7 to £10 each. Doctors have now decided this situation is ridiculous and that they cannot be expected to make their patients wait any longer to be given a drug that is licensed for use and known to be effective.

Ian Bogle, chairman of the British Medical Association council, wrote to Mr Dobson yesterday to record members' "dis-satisfaction at the way in which the introduction of this medicine has been handled".

He said doctors were placed in an impossible position by the long delay. "On the one hand they are mindful of the department's request not to prescribe Viagra but on the other they have to respond to the needs of their patients," the letter says. Clinical guidance from the department on Viagra "would now be almost irrelevant as doctors have responded to the needs of their patients in spite of the temporary ban". The Health Department said that its guidelines, issued on September 14, that doctors should not prescribe Viagra on the NHS "except in exceptional circumstances", still stood.

# Driver banned for combing her hair

A BEAUTY salon employee caught combing her hair while driving at 70mph down a busy motorway was banned from driving for six months and fined £20 yesterday.

Police captured Catherine McGuire, 37, on video as she attempted to overtake other vehicles and veered between the hard shoulder and the central reservation of the M9 in April.

An unmarked police car followed her for 3½ miles between Stirling and Falkirk as she drove to visit her boyfriend. Footage taken by a police camera showed her swerving to avoid several vehicles.

Yesterday McGuire of Cowie, Stirlingshire, pleaded guilty at Stirling Sheriff Court to a reduced charge of driving without due care and attention while combing her hair.

She originally faced a more serious charge of dangerous driving but an allegation that she also applied make-up while driving was dropped.

Sentencing her, Sheriff Kenneth Stewart said: "It should be obvious to all drivers that 100 per cent concentration is required and your driving and your behaviour on this occasion was certainly not acceptable."

The sentence was welcomed by road safety campaigners who said the ban would serve as a warning to other motorists. Wendy Moss, chairwoman of the Scottish Campaign Against Irresponsible Drivers, said: "I hope this sends out a signal to every driver that you don't fiddle around with cigarette packets, you don't talk on mobile phones, you don't mess

**Woman was caught trying to look her best while driving at 70mph to meet boyfriend, reports Shirley English**

around with lighters and you don't start combing your hair."

A plea by Ken Dalling, McGuire's lawyer, that she needed her licence to get to her new job at the Electric Beach tanning salon in Falkirk was ignored. After the trial Mr Dalling said the sentence was "excessive" and he would appeal.

Karina Duffy, deputy fiscal, said McGuire was spotted by Central Scotland Police as she joined the Edinburgh to Perth motorway travelling towards Grange-mouth, Miss Duffy said: "The vehicle was swerving between the hard shoulder and the centre line. The accused continued to arrange herself while driving with one hand on the steering wheel. It was apparent to the police officers she was clearly not in control of her vehicle."

In her defence Mr Dalling said McGuire was embarrassed by her behaviour but had not exceeded the speed limit. She accepted that she had not been in a position to react quickly to any unexpected incident on the road.

Her boyfriend, who would give his name only as Eddie,

figures, black dogs accounted for 425 accidents last year, while other animals were cited as the cause for 1,921 crashes.

In the past ten years there have been a growing number of cases of motorists being convicted of offences other than speeding or drink driving. Two years ago a Newcastle judge was caught shaving as he drove his BMW to court. His excuse was that he was late for work. In 1996 a Welsh salesman was convicted of dangerous driving when he was spotted reading a book that was propped on the steering wheel as he negotiated heavy traffic. In 1995 an off-duty policeman was fined for careless driving after he was caught kissing his girlfriend while travelling at 70mph on the M3. The climb lasted for four miles.

In 1992 a man was convicted of not being in control of his vehicle as he drove at 50mph brushing his hair and admiring his looks in the rear-view mirror. In the same year a woman was seen breastfeeding her baby while driving. Other dangerous driving activities recorded by police include a woman removing hair curlers and a man eating a sherry trifle with a spoon as he negotiated a roundabout.

The Highway Code instructs drivers not to use mobile phones. However, next year its advice on what not to do while driving is to be extended to include listening to loud music, map-reading, inserting cassettes, eating, drinking and arguing with their passengers.

**It was apparent to the police she was not in control of her vehicle?**

ident if they had been doing something they should not while driving. Consequently there were no exact figures.

However, he said a common excuse given to police after a crash was that a "mysterious black dog ran in front of the car". That usually meant they were struggling to eat a sandwich, light a cigarette or read a map, he said.

According to government



Catherine McGuire yesterday after pleading guilty to driving without due care

# MP 'fired secretary who said office was death trap'

A LABOUR MP swore at his long-serving constituency secretary, neglected her when she was seriously ill and eventually fired her for refusing to work in a "death trap" office, a tribunal was told yesterday.

Bridget Benton, 56, was dismissed in February when she told Bruce George, 56, the MP for Walsall South, that she believed her new office was a fire hazard, it was said. Mrs Benton, a magistrate, is claiming unfair dismissal at an employment tribunal in Birmingham.

The hearing was told that Mrs Benton started working from home for Mr George, 56, on a self-employed basis 24 years ago, and was offered a formal contract of employment in 1988.

The tribunal was told how after the MP's wedding in 1992, the working relationship between him and Mrs Benton began to seriously deteriorate. Mrs Benton said Mr George told another member of his staff to tell her he did not want to speak to her.

Things got worse in December 1996, Mrs Benton told the hearing, when she became seriously ill with a bowel condition that forced her to stay off work for five months. Mrs Benton said: "He did not write, he did not ring, he did not even ask how I was; it was months before I got a response."

In May, Mr George eventually turned up on her doorstep and demanded to see a doctor's note, although she had already supplied him with two. "The first words out of his mouth were 'I want a written report off your doctor as to what's wrong with you,'" Mrs Benton told the hearing.

After her illness, Mrs Benton was asked to move to a new office in Walsall. She told the MP the office was a "death trap" that had an electric wire stuck to a desk with plastic adhesive, and windows that could not be opened.

Mr George told the hearing he had desperately tried to avoid sacking Mrs Benton, with whom he had once had an "exceptionally good" working relationship. The tribunal reserved its decision.

# Women should take care to have a brush within the law

**Sandra Parsons offers some sisterly advice on how to avoid zooming and grooming**

CATHERINE MCGUIRE was plain silly. Any woman knows that the motorway is not the place to do your hair — at 70mph there is too much vibration to wield the brush with any accuracy. The traffic lights are a much more suitable venue for performing one's toilette.

Yes, your workaholic, we women are the real villains of the road. We leave road rage, newspaper reading, mobile phone conversations and taking both hands off the wheel to rummage for a cassette in the

glove compartment to the men. For ourselves we reserve the heinous crime of hairbrushing and *maquillage* (though years of experience have taught me that trying it at anything over 20mph is futile and messy).

Of course we all know it is illegal. And to do it on a motorway is unnecessary and terrifyingly reckless. Nevertheless, on my drive across

London each morning I see innumerable women driving everything from battered Fiats to sleek Mercedes putting on their make-up. Most of us aren't stupid enough to do it while overtaking at speed, but you generally don't have 15 spare minutes to stand in front of the bathroom mirror each morning when there is breakfast to be produced, children to be chivvied, news to be

listened to and washing machines to be loaded.

But there are plenty of sensible opportunities to be seized: the wise woman turns a traffic jam into a lipstick moment. On my own journey from west to east London, the Hogarth Roundabout is where I reach for the tinted moisturiser, and the the Hammersmith flyover for the eye pencil. Piccadilly is a window of

opportunity for mascara, and Trafalgar Square another for blusher. I can rely on Embankment for my lipstick, while the lights at Tower Bridge give me just enough time to wield the hairbrush.

The only time was forced to I abandon this routine was when I was foolish enough to whip out the mascara while stuck behind a police car. "You won't look so pretty,

love, if you go through the windscreen," said the officer sternly. This was obviously sensible advice. I thought, shoving the make-up back into the bag. Sadly, the first few colleagues I passed in the office all asked: "Are you feeling all right? You really don't look well."

I don't condone Catherine McGuire's careless driving, but I fear that her six-month ban is unlikely to change my own make-up habits or those of my fellow female motorists on the Great West Road.

# Ekland 'in case of mistaken identity'

THE actress Britt Ekland was wrong in identifying a shopper as the man who robbed her of her £10,000 Rolex watch outside her local supermarket, a court was told yesterday.

Gareth Rees, for the defence, told the jury: "This is a case where Britt Ekland is as honest as the day is long, but she is mistaken."

"While it was clearly a shocking and terrible ordeal for her, doing her best, and while feeling sympathy for her... the only proper verdict in this case is one of not guilty."

Mr Rees had asked for the case against Carl Hutson, 20, to be thrown out because of problems over the issue of identification. Time after time, in courts, there had been difficulty caused by identification evidence which, by its nature, because of human frailty, was essentially unreliable.

He said that when Miss Ekland picked out Hutson at an identity parade, she had also thought it might be one of the witnesses participating.

Mr Hutson, of Streatham, South London, on the second day of the trial at Southwark Crown Court, yesterday exercised his right not to give evidence. In a statement to police, he admitted visiting Somersfield supermarket in Chelsea with his girlfriend and their two-year-old child last September, but denied the robbery.

# Rapist from the CID wins judge's mercy

A RAPIST was given a year off his sentence yesterday because he is a policeman. Detective Constable David Potter was told that his previous exemplary record, and the fact that other prisoners would be tougher on him, meant he was being given nine years instead of ten.

Potter, of Epsom, Liverpool, tricked a former girlfriend into his home, tied her up, abused her and raped her. His victim has since attempted suicide and spent time as a psychiatric in-patient.

At Liverpool Crown Court, Potter, 44, mouthed "No", appeared to collapse and burst into tears in the dock as the jury returned a guilty verdict after a six-day trial. The detective, who is divorced with two children, denied rape, false imprisonment and indecent assault, claiming that the charges were a fantasy and that his relationship with the woman had ended in acrimony.

Mr Justice Brown told him he was guilty of a serious sexual assault upon an emotionally vulnerable and defenceless woman: "You tricked her into going to your house. You tied her up and abused and humiliated her and, after a depraved assault with your truncheon, you raped her. The effect upon her has been devastating."

However, the judge said that the sentence could have



Potter: his victim attempted suicide

# Dogs left in Volvo 'cooked to death'

TWO dogs owned by Lady Bute, widow of the 6th Marquis, died after her daughter left them in a car for more than three hours in sweltering heat, a court was told yesterday.

A vet said that the rowleweaver, Misky, and a Finnish Spitz, Kinkona, suffered cruelty of a hideous nature. The incident happened while Diana Percy was staying with her mother in Kensington, West London. Magistrates at Guildford, Surrey, were told that the dogs were found in a Volvo estate parked in the sun and with the rear windows open just three inches. A shaded area was 200 yards away.

Percy, 33, a student at Glasgow University, had left the dogs in the car while visiting the Royal Horticultural Gardens at Wisley, Surrey. Carl Woolf, for the RSPCA, said that the defendant returned to find the dogs unconscious. She attempted to revive them by pouring water over them. A veterinary report later said that they had cooked to death.

Percy, who admitted two charges of causing unnecessary suffering, said there was no intent to do them harm. The chairman of the bench, Eric Ellison, called for pre-sentencing reports with a view to imposing a community penalty. The offences each carry a maximum penalty of six months in prison or a fine of £5,000.

# Last bow for entertainment giant

FEW corners of British entertainment remained untouched by the life of Lord Grade. Even the rabbi who delivered the address at his funeral in North London yesterday had acted as historical adviser to the Grade film *Jesus of Nazareth*.

Lord Grade, a colossus of British film and television, died last Sunday aged 91, ending a life that had begun on Christmas Day 1906 in the Ukrainian town of Tokmak. Only a few days before his death, he had been at his desk as usual at 7am, planning his next film and wreathed in the smoke of a Monte Cristo. He departed in the simplest of ceremonies at Willesden Liberal Jewish Cemetery, his coffin unburdened by flowers or wreaths. Judaic tradition holds that in the levelling of death you should not be able to tell a rich man from a poor one. Lord Grade was certainly not the latter.

But the story of his greatest production — his own life — could be read in the faces of the 150 mourners present in the bare, simply-furnished prayer hall. They were led by his widow, Kathleen Moody, and their only son Paul.

Most notable among an extended family presence was his nephew Michael Grade, the former chief executive of Channel 4 who has now taken over the family reins as head of First Leisure Cor-

Boots hairbrushes. The advertisement features a large, stylized 'save' text at the top. Below it, several hairbrushes are shown, including a 'Satellite' brand brush. The background is dark and textured, suggesting a close-up of hair or a similar material. The Boots logo is visible in the bottom right corner.

IN THE SATURDAY TIMES

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# Inmates 'ran amok' at jail for children

Four youths are accused of violent disorder. Richard Ford reports

FIFTEEN inmates armed with metal poles and socks filled with snooker balls ransacked part of Britain's first jail for children aged 12-14, a court was told yesterday.

A hard core of persistent young offenders launched two hours of disturbances after trouble throughout the day at the Medway Secure Training Centre in Rochester, Kent.

Staff at the unit, run by Rebound, a subsidiary of Group 4, lost control and were forced to seek safety in a secure area of the prison, which holds inmates at a cost of £2,400 each per week. A senior officer had to summon police to restore order. Police in full protective gear eventually arrived at the centre, built to hold and care for the country's most persistent young offenders, and ended the disturbance in June.

One 13-year-old boy told officers that he had taken part in a mini-riot because "it looked like fun". Medway Youth Court in Chatham was told.

Four young offenders aged between 13 and 15 denied violent disorder yesterday. The three youths and a teenage girl sat in the well of the court with their parents seated immediately behind them. Before the trial began Michael Kelly, the stipendiary magistrate, called each youth into the court to explain the proceedings. The 15-year-old girl sat in front of her father. The court was told that she lived with her father and brother in North London after her parents split up two years ago.

Another youth, a teenager from Gloucestershire, failed to appear after disappearing from his family home, where he had been ordered to live after being released from the centre last month. Yesterday police began a hunt to bring him to court.

A youth aged 14 from North London pleaded guilty yesterday to criminal damage of £329 and was remanded in custody for sentence next month. Five other youngsters from the

centre have already admitted violent disorder.

Paul Valder, prosecuting, said that only 15 inmates had been in the centre, which was designed for 40 youngsters, and only 15 staff had been on duty when the young offenders "ran amok". He said: "Trouble broke out as four inmates began running around and behaving boisterously as they were moved from the gym to their living unit."

"Another inmate ran with a snooker ball, threatening staff and forcing them to release an inmate they were restraining. Then they took off their shoes and socks and put snooker balls in their socks. They waved them and threatened

the staff with them. The staff decided that they should seek refuge in a sterile area inside the complex."

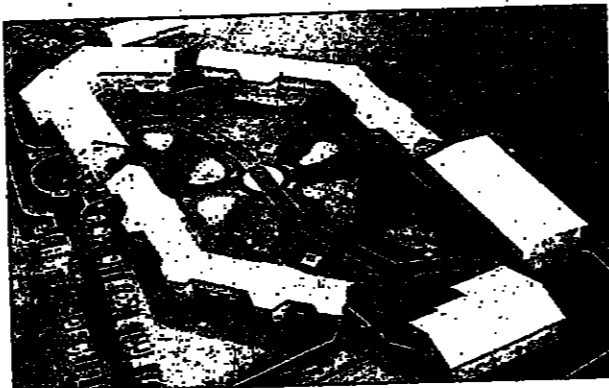
He said that as matters got out of control other inmates broke into the education block and emerged with metal legs taken from tables and furniture. The began stacking the furniture against the perimeter fence in a half-hearted attempt to scale it. "The group then left that area and went back towards a residential block, where they began smashing ground floor windows," Mr Valder said.

One of the teenagers on trial was in the unit and shouted to the group to "come on" before he began banging on the glass with part of a vacuum cleaner.

Staff then saw other inmates trying to smash windows from the inside and the youngsters were becoming more and more excited by what was occurring.

The youths inside the unit had heard over staff radios that the police had been called, and were able to warn those outside that officers were on their way. Staff could hear damage being caused in a residential unit which was effectively ransacked throughout the evening, he said.

The hearing continues today.



The Medway Secure Training Centre in Rochester



Douglas Hogg yesterday. He said his colleagues behaved like a "disorderly rabble"

# Hogg attacks Tory Cabinet on BSE crisis

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

DOUGLAS HOGG accused John Major and other Tory former Cabinet colleagues yesterday of failing to take action that could have avoided the European Union ban on British beef.

In a five-hour appearance before the BSE inquiry, Mr Hogg said the Government had chosen to delay, allowing itself to be "driven by events like a disorderly rabble".

Mr Hogg, who was Agriculture Minister from July 1995, until the election in May last year, said he considered resigning when his proposals were rejected but decided to abide by the principle of collective responsibility.

The clash of views occurred at a meeting chaired by Mr Major, then Prime Minister, on March 19, 1996, the day before the announcement in Parliament that "mad cow" disease had probably passed to humans.

Documents obtained by the inquiry show that Mr Hogg proposed an immediate ban on the sale and export of all beef and beef products from cattle over 30 months and said

the Government should be prepared to pay farmers compensation of up to £500 million. The logic behind the proposal was that BSE was virtually unknown in cattle under that age.

Mr Hogg also recommended that the Government immediately set up a judicial inquiry under the chairmanship of a High Court judge into its handling of the BSE crisis. All the proposals were turned down.

Mr Hogg wanted to go further than the Government's scientific advisers were recommending, and other members of the Cabinet, including the Attorney-General, voiced concern that "disproportionate" measures could provoke legal action for damages from the beef industry.

Although rejected at the time, a ban on 30-month-old beef was introduced a month later under pressure from the European Union, which on March 27, 1996, had announced a world-wide ban on British beef exports. The ban is only now being lifted. Hearings before the inquiry will resume in late February.

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## Three arrested over minibus death crash

The owner and driver of a minibus in which members of a village football club died last week on the way to a Christmas party were arrested yesterday. Herbert Jones, a businessman, and Daniel Randall, 26, the driver, were held for questioning at Leicester. Graham Jager, 48, who was at the wheel of a lorry which collided with the bus, was also arrested and questioned in West Yorkshire. The crash on the A42 in Leicestershire left five dead and 12 injured among the passengers from Groby Stamford FC, based at the Stamford Arms pub in Groby, Leicestershire. Police would not reveal the basis for the arrests.

## Greenpeace threat

Greenpeace has threatened to take the Government to court next year unless it implements an European Union directive aimed at protecting marine habitats from the impacts of oil licensing. The group claims that Britain has implemented the habitat directive, to safeguard dolphins and whales, up to 12 nautical miles offshore only, instead of the 200 nautical miles offshore required by the EU.

## Briton breaks bail

Stephen Handy, 37, from Coventry, who is alleged to have attacked an air hostess with a broken vodka bottle aboard a charter flight as it landed at Malaga airport six weeks ago, failed to appear in court again yesterday to renew his bail conditions. The court in Malaga refused to issue an arrest warrant for Mr Handy, who returned to Spain three weeks ago.

## Cambridge first

One of Cambridge University's oldest foundations has become the first of the traditional men's colleges to appoint a woman as its Master. Sandra Dawson, who heads the university's Judge Management Institute, will take over the leadership of Sidney Sussex College next July. Professor Dawson will continue as director of the institute when succeeding Professor Gabriel Horn at Sidney Sussex.

# The rapid rise of journalist named as spy

### Stephen Farrell and Raymond Snoddy on the man who chose a career in Fleet Street over Whitehall

AS DOMINIC LAWSON celebrates his 42nd birthday today, he finds himself, yet again, the centre of attention. One of the youngest editors on Fleet Street, born into a family steeped in politics and journalism, his rise — both social and professional — has been swift and spectacular. The late Diana, Princess of Wales, was godmother to his second daughter, Domenica.

Mr Lawson, like his father Nigel, made his name through a spell as Editor of *The Spectator*. But while his father used the weekly political magazine as a springboard for a successful political career, rising to become Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer under Baroness Thatcher, and later Lord Lawson of Blaby, Dominic remained a journalist and became Editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*.

A keen cricketer and chess player, Mr Lawson was educated at Westminster. After a brief unhappy spell at Eton, and Oxford he joined the BBC in the late 1970s as a researcher, moving to the *Financial Times* in 1981 on an annual salary of £9,000. By 1983 he was the paper's energy correspondent and three years later became the *Lex* columnist.

Lawson always took his cricket seriously — sometimes too seriously. A row between Peter Osborne, a political journalist on the *Express*, and Lawson, both of whom were playing for a journalist XI against NatWest at the Oval, ended up with Mr Osborne head-butting Mr Lawson. The rift has never been made up.

In 1987, at the age of 34 Mr Lawson was appointed deputy editor of the *Spectator*. Three years later he assumed the Editor's chair and a salary of about £90,000.

Professionally, his ascent dates back to the infamous 1990 taped interview with Nicholas Ridley, then the Conservative Secretary, who was accused of anti-German remarks. Mr Lawson insisted that the taped conversation had been on the record; Mr Ridley appeared to think that it had been on Lobby terms (inadmissible). The article, which went round the world, cost Mr Ridley his job and established Mr Lawson's reputation. At the time he was married

#### THE EDITOR

apparently happily, to his first wife Jane Whytehead, an actress, with whom he lived in Camden Town, with their cat Teabag. However, invitations began pouring in seeking his attendance at every political and society dinner in town, and within months gossip columns were linking him with the dynamic socialite The Honourable Rosa Monckton, managing director of the London jewellery store Tiffany and a close friend of Diana, Princess of Wales.

Ms Monckton, who comes from one of Britain's most prominent Roman Catholic families, is the daughter of Viscount Monckton of Brechley. Her grandfather, the first viscount, was Edward VIII's legal adviser during the abdication crisis and went on to become a Conservative minister and chairman of Midland Bank.

Mr Lawson and Ms Monckton married in December 1991, while living in a top floor flat near Kensington Palace. A regular fixture in her own right in glossy lifestyle magazines, with her BMW, Valentino clothes and appearances at polo matches, Ms Monckton was renowned for making flamboyant gestures. She is said to have given Mr Lawson cufflinks costing £900, and to have paid for the deposit on her first flat by selling a diamond Cartier cross given to her by a godmother.

Ms Lawson introduced her husband to royal circles. The Princess went on holiday with the Lawsons in Greece ten days before her fatal accident.

The first serious criticisms of his career have surfaced recently, with claims of mismanagement and dissension at the *Sunday Telegraph*, after the rapid departure of four senior members of staff, one of whom he had shared six months before. The paper's agent through the London and Home Counties property market has matched their successful careers.

Their eldest daughter Savannah, was born in December 1992, while they lived in a £50,000 flat in Fimlico, London. The following year they moved to a large house in Sunningdale Terrace, Bayswater,

worth about £650,000. Mr Lawson remained in great demand as a journalist and wrote columns successively in the *Sunday Correspondent*, *Financial Times*, *Daily Telegraph* and *Sunday Telegraph*. His career flourished and in October 1995, at the age of 38, he was made editor of *The Sunday Telegraph*.

Last year, following the birth of their second daughter Domenica, who has Down's Syndrome, the couple moved out of London to a magnificent farmhouse set amid sprawling acres of forest near the East Sussex village of Dallington. Mr Lawson insists that his new life in the country is well worth the commute.



Dominic Lawson and his wife, Rosa Monckton: the couple married seven years ago

# A socialite wife with religious and royal links

THE family into which Dominic Lawson married seven years ago are devout and well-connected Roman Catholics.

Rosa Monckton was educated at an Ursuline convent in Belgium but left school at the age of 16 to attend a bilingual secretarial course.

In the early 1970s she went into the jewellery business, working in Monte Carlo for Cartier, Asprey and Tabbah before moving to Tiffany's in 1985 after telling the New York store it needed to open a branch in London.

Her father Viscount Monckton of Brechley, a retired Major General, owns a 400-acre farm in Harrietsham, near Maidstone, Kent.

Now 83, he became director of public relations at the Ministry of Defence and Chief of Staff, HQ, at the British Army of the Rhine before leaving the Army in 1967 at the age of 50, saying he could not afford to educate his four sons and one daughter on an Army salary of £4,500 a year.

He went into the City, becoming a director of the Anglo-Portuguese Bank and dep-

#### THE MONCKTONS

uty chairman of the Gulf Guarantee Bank.

His eldest son and heir, Christopher Monckton, is a former special policy adviser to Mrs Thatcher and editor of the Catholic paper *The Universe*. He lives in Scotland.

Rosa has three other brothers, twins Timothy, 43, now living in Australia, and Jonathan, a former Benedictine monk who is now married and living in South West London.

The youngest son Anthony, 38, a former officer in the 9/12th Lancers, joined the Foreign Office in 1987 and in April 1996 was appointed 1st Secretary (Political) in the Croatian capital Zagreb.

Like his granddaughter, the first Lord Monckton was a royal confidant. He knew the young King Edward when they were undergraduates at Oxford and acted as an intermediary between Edward and the then Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, drafting the abdication statement.

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#### THE ACCUSERS



## MP who loathes the conspiracy of politics

THE Labour MP Brian Sedgmore (above) has a long record of calling public figures to account. Since entering Parliament in 1974, he has called for several resignations in the House and been relentless in his pursuit of "spooks" once asking Margaret Thatcher to investigate whether the late Lord Rochdale had been the fifth man in the 1930s Cambridge spy ring.

Mr Sedgmore has a conspiratorial take on politics, and because he doesn't restrict his attacks to the opposition parties, Labour keeps him out of the political loop. He is also an author and freelance journalist. His last publication was the *Insider's Guide to Politics*, and he is widely believed to be the author of the *HP Sauce* column in *Private Eye*, which carries embarrassing stories about MPs.

## Spy who went out into the cold

THE former MI6 officer Richard Tomkinson was sacked from the service in 1995 because it was felt he was not a good team player. He had been on extended probation, which was taken to end his career as a spy.

He had come to MI6 after obtaining a first-class degree in aeronautical engineering and a period working with a management consultants in the City of London. He had also served in one of the Territorial Army regiments of the SAS.

During his four-year career in MI6, he served in Moscow and Bosnia and worked in London in the section dealing with counter-proliferation operations against Iran.

After leaving MI6, he tried to take his former employers to an industrial tribunal, claiming unfair dismissal. But he was prevented from putting his case after Malcolm Rifkind, then Foreign Secretary, signed a unilateral order prohibiting the release of any information about his work.

When he claimed he was destitute, MI6 gave him some money but on the understanding that he drop his case.

However, he won a MI6 that he would sign a book and subsequently went to Australia where he showed a synopsis to a publisher.

When Tomkinson, 36, returned to Britain, he was arrested by Special Branch officers at his home in Milton Keynes and was charged under the Official Secrets Act. He pleaded guilty to his trial at the Old Bailey in December last year and was sentenced to 12 months in prison. He was released in May.

# Eating for two is no aid to baby's health

Ian Murray on research into how a woman's diet affects her unborn child

BY THE time a woman knows that she is pregnant it is usually too late for her to do anything to improve the health of her unborn child, researchers have found. "Eating for two" in the later months of a pregnancy will make little difference if the mother had a poor diet at the time of conception.

## Right food at the right time

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

THE recommended diet for women likely to become pregnant is a mix of the five main food types, according to the Health Education Authority.

Carbohydrates, such as bread, potatoes, rice or pasta, should form the main part of every meal. Several servings of low fat milk and dairy foods are recommended, but blue-veined and soft cheeses should be avoided.

Five servings of fruit or vegetables, which can include unsweetened juices, are essential. Frozen, canned or dried products are perfectly good.

The best diet should include one or two servings of lean meat, skinned poultry or fish each day, and a portion of oily fish once a week. Liver must be avoided to prevent an excessive intake of vitamin A.

Vegetarian alternatives are fine but those following them may need to take supplements of iron and vitamin D. Vegans ought to seek professional advice on the supplements they need. It is important to avoid high-dose multivitamin supplements which can be too strong for the unborn baby.

Only small amounts of

foods with fats or sugar should be eaten. Pregnant women are advised to snack on fruits, beans on toast, baked potatoes, humous or low fat yoghurts instead of crisps, fizzy drinks and chocolates.

All women planning to have children need folic acid, which helps to protect against spina bifida and other congenital problems. It is found naturally in broccoli and carrots.

At least eight cups of fluid a day are needed, although alcohol should be restricted to no more than one unit a week.

months of the pregnancy were crucial. Embryos and foetuses — into which the embryo develops after eight weeks — that were small for their age during that period were twice as likely to be born prematurely and three times more likely to be among the smallest 5 per cent at birth.

Gordon Smith, who led the research, said: "We used to think that variations in birth weight were determined in the second half of pregnancy. Now it appears that conditions quite early in gestation or even perhaps before conception are contributing to low birth weight and the risk of extremely premature birth."

"This finding could help explain why programmes of nutritional supplementation for expectant mothers deemed to be at high risk of a low birth-weight typically only increase the baby's weight by two or three ounces. Poor foetal growth may be determined before the woman knows she is pregnant or has amended for pre-natal care."

"Obstetricians can't generally predict extremely premature delivery and when a baby is born prematurely there is often no obvious cause. Our study suggests that inadequate transfer of nutrients to the growing foetus may explain some of these cases."

Dr Smith, reporting the findings in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, says they show that there should be better nutrition and healthcare for women who are likely to become pregnant. Waiting until after conception may be too long.



Staff Sergeant Larry McFarlane with recruits, from left, Lydia McPherson, Laura Bunce and Tammy Knight

## Left, right and fast forward

Michael Evans reports on a new training video for Army recruits

NEXT year's Army recruits will be sent Jane Fonda-style keep-fit videos, complete with recommended diet regimes, to get them into shape for the Armed Forces.

The video will feature soldiers in Cyprus being put through their paces to a song called *Fit for the Best*, specially written for the Army.

Featuring the British hockey international Ian Jennings as the Army's answer to Jane Fonda, and produced with the

help of Saatchi & Saatchi and *Health and Fitness* magazine, the video will be sent to all recruits about five weeks before their official physicals.

Major-General Christopher Elliott, the Director-General of the Army's Training and Recruiting Agency, said that the latest Army recruitment

campaign, which had adopted a more caring image and gradual approach to peak fitness, was already proving a success. Yesterday Steve Rostling, 19, from Brixton, South London, became the 15,000th young person recruited this year — the highest figure since 1991.

Another new recruit, Tammy Knight, 17, from Forest Hill, is one of many young women enlisted into a special female-only troop — for training purposes only — at her training base at Pirbright in Surrey. Ms Knight is joining the Royal Artillery as a gunner driver. Her commanding officer at Pirbright believes that women recruits train better and have a greater chance of passing their physical tests if they work together as a

rate unit. Women have been allowed to apply for the Royal Artillery since April.

General Elliott said that many young recruits were already very fit and would not need to spend weeks at home or in the gym working from the Army video. But the Army recognised that, while young people were generally better educated and more computer-literate than in the past, they often needed more help to reach the required standards of fitness.

He said the expenditure of taxpayers' money on the fitness video was justified because it would help prepare unfit recruits for life in the Army.

Ms Knight, who posed for photographs while Staff Sergeant Larry McFarlane belted her into her car, said she thought that the video was "a brilliant idea". She has to get fit before undergoing final physical tests in January.

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## Life term for killer caught by footprint

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

A MURDERER who was incriminated by the footprint he left on his victim's face was jailed for life yesterday.

Justin Plummer, 26, a prolific burglar, was found guilty of murdering Janice Cartwright-Gilbert, 38, after St Albans Crown Court was told that the pattern of the sole from his right trainer had been found on her bruised skin. Police and forensic scientists who had examined the heel of the trainer found a tiny mark on its Nike logo, which made it as distinctive as a fingerprint.

Mrs Cartwright-Gilbert was murdered in February 1997 in the Bedfordshire village of Wilden, where she and her partner were living in a mobile home while building a house. She was clerk to two local parish councils and served on the board of governors for Wilden Lower School.

At the time of the attack Plummer had been prowling around Wilden looking for a house to burgle. Police believe that Mrs Cartwright-Gilbert, who was alone at the time, disturbed him. Plummer stabbed her several times and throttled and kicked her, then left her in the mobile home and set it alight.

Suspicion fell on him when the footprint on the body was found to match that found at the scene of a burglary in a nearby village the day before.

Passing sentence, Mr Justice Gage told Plummer that he had shown no remorse for what was a wicked crime.

## Family jailed over wife left to die

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE husband and in-laws of a woman in a miserable arranged marriage were jailed yesterday for failing to call a doctor as she lay beaten and dying at the age of 21.

Birmingham Crown Court was told that Sukhjit Kaur had come from India to marry at 19 but had no independence, made no friends and was under the control of her husband, Sham Singh Masson, 21, and his parents Arjan Masson, 42, and Kanta Rani, 42.

Colman Treacy, QC, for the prosecution, said that she became estranged from her husband when her weight doubled to 18 stone, and he began to sleep in the garden shed. She went on a "severe diet" eating only salt and vinegar, losing about 7 stone in the weeks before her death.

She became weak and unable to stand. Her husband beat her, and she became like a child, incontinent and spoon-fed. Finally she fell and hit her head, dying of a brain haemorrhage ten days later.

Mr Treacy said that the family did not call a doctor because the dead woman's body was covered in bruises inflicted with a high instrument. The court was told that her husband admitted beating her the night before her death and three weeks earlier.

The husband and his parents, of Handsworth, Birmingham, were found guilty of manslaughter. The men were jailed for 2½ years, and Kanta Rani was jailed two years.

## Doubts cast over human clone test

BY NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

CLAIMS by a South Korean team to have created a human clone were yesterday treated sceptically by British experts.

The team, from the infertility clinic of Kyunghee University in Seoul, destroyed the clone when it consisted of only four cells — too soon to be sure that it was a human embryo, according to Harry Griffin, of the Roslin Institute in Edinburgh, where "Dolly the lamb" was cloned.

Lee Bo-yeon, of the Seoul clinic, said the cloning had been achieved by taking an unfertilised egg, removing the nucleus, and replacing it with

the nucleus of an ordinary cell taken from a woman in her 30s. The cell was then persuaded to start dividing, using a chemical technique developed at the University of Honolulu. Dr Lee said: "If implanted into a uterine wall of a carrier, we can assume that a child would be formed and that it would have the same genetic characteristics as the donor." But Dr Griffin said: "By stopping the experiment where they did, the Korean researchers are unable to provide any evidence that the transferred nucleus was successfully 'reprogrammed'."

# Contraceptive pill puts men off the scent

BY ALEXANDRA FRIAN  
SOCIAL AFFAIRS  
CORRESPONDENT

## PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

THE contraceptive pill can make women less attractive to men because it suppresses the production of chemical secretions known as pheromones, new research has shown. Scientists in Austria and Switzerland have also discovered that women who take the pill may find that it destroys their ability to find the perfect mate.

with an immune system that is different from their own. With women on the pill this is reversed and they go for the smells of men with an immune system almost identical to their own. But if your immune system is too similar you will have difficulty creating offspring. So being on the pill can make you choose the wrong mate.

Karl Grammer, of the University of Vienna, said yesterday that the importance of pheromones as weapons in the "chemical warfare" between men and women was greatly underestimated. "Normally, females like the smell of men

obvious odour, they may be "received" or "perceived" by the vomeronasal organ inside the nose.

Because one of the vital roles of pheromones appears to be their ability to attract members of the opposite sex, perfume companies have striven over the past decade to produce them synthetically and package them for sale as mild aphrodisiacs. The Internet is littered with web pages advertising such fragrances.

Little is known, however, of the way pheromones work and their precise effects.

Professor Grammer said that the effects of the pill on female pheromone production and on women's sensitivity to male pheromones had been clearly demonstrated by researchers at the University of Berne in Switzerland.

In order to discover more about the way pheromones enable humans to communicate non-verbally and non-cognitively, Professor Grammer exposed a group of 66 young men unknowingly to a synthetic vaginal pheromone known as copulin.

Their reactions to photographs of women, and female voices, were tested in the presence of pheromones, and compared with the effects of ordinary water. The study found that pheromones increased the ratings men gave unattractive women, and decreased the ratings they gave to highly attractive women.

"The most surprising result was the strong equalising effect the pheromones had. It seems that everybody benefits," Professor Grammer said. He described the effect as "a very nice trick that women can play on men" to ensure the survival of the species.

Professor Grammer presented his findings at the British Psychological Society London Conference yesterday. His research also showed that women found the male pheromone androsterone, found in underarm sweat, unattractive except when they were ovulating and at their most fertile.

## Magistrates' decisions show little consistency

Magistrates are so inconsistent in their decision making that it is almost impossible to predict the chances of a defendant being given bail, the conference was told. In a study in which 81 magistrates were asked to give bail judgments in 27 hypothetical criminal cases — seven of which were identical, save for the fact that names had been changed — only one third made the same decision in all seven of the duplicate cases. Dr Mandep Dhami, of City University, said magistrates who had spent 35 years on the bench were just as inconsistent as those with only six months' experience.

## Father's grief often ignored

The suffering of fathers after a miscarriage is often ignored and downgraded because all attention is focused on helping the mother through her grief, the meeting heard. Kim Conway, of Macquarie University, Australia, said that after a miscarriage, pressure was put on the father to be strong and not outwardly to express his emotions, for the sake of the mother. This could lead to the father suffering chronic and delayed grief, which often went unrecognised and untreated.

## Bonus plans cut risk taking

The payment of enormous annual bonuses to City traders and investment bankers can be counter-productive because it encourages them not to take too many risks. A study of 107 traders in three investment banks found that many traders strove in the first nine months of the year to qualify for bonuses, and then eased up. The study also found that the most successful risk-takers were unopinionated, unemotional and undisciplined people with big egos.



By SUE LAFFEMAN

## Children with zest for life win bravery awards

TEN children, all with their own stories of bombings, pain, illness, survival and bravery, posed for photographs with the Duchess of Kent after receiving awards for their courage yesterday. Among them was Gordon Murray, 10, who was left paralysed in a car crash five years ago. He left his wheelchair to walk up to the Duchess to receive his medal at the 1998 *Woman's Own* Children of Courage awards. Also honoured were Emmet McLaughlin, 9, (on the left of the Duchess) who survived the Omagh bombing, and Laura Giddings, 8, (on her

right), whose foot had to be amputated after a terrorist bomb in South Africa.

Only Adam Line was missing from the line-up of the ten bravest children in Britain because he lost his battle with leukaemia days before his 12th birthday in May.

Shortly before he made a will leaving his toys to his two brothers, and his £500 savings to his hospital on the

Isle of Wight. After spending a morning with Tony and Cherie Blair at Downing Street, they were feted by celebrities including Joan Collins, the Gladiator Rhino, Baroness Thatcher, Cilla Black and the pop group 911, and presented with their awards in a ceremony at Westminster Abbey.

Emmet, of Buncrana, Co Donegal, amazed everyone with his zest for life

since the Omagh bombing in August. The explosion killed his cousin, Oran Doherty, 8, and friends James Barker and Roland McGrory. Emmet, who underwent emergency surgery to remove shrapnel from his bowel, and suffered severe burns to his hands and face, said: "I'm getting an award because I was brave in hospital."

Laura, from Bramshaw, Hampshire, was on a family holiday in Cape Town last summer when a bomb exploded in a Planet Hollywood restaurant. Yesterday she sat on Cherie Blair's lap, discussed nail varnish and jewellery, then removed her shoe to show off the toes on her artificial foot.

## Bus crash girl, 2, makes swift recovery

By PAUL WILKINSON

TWO weeks ago Charlotte Anderson was critically ill after a bus hit her as she stood in a queue, killing her mother and another woman.

Today she is home in time for Christmas with her sister and father after amazing doctors with the speed of her recovery.

Charlotte, two, was thrown clear of the accident at Sunderland bus station on December 1 in which her mother Nicola, 26, and Janine Harrison, 18, a

student teacher, died. Charlotte suffered a fractured skull and leg injuries and spent four days in intensive care.

Yesterday, however, her father, John, took her home for a reunion with her sister Amelia, 5, at their house in Sunderland. Mr Anderson, 39, said: "There was a time when I honestly never thought I would see this day. I remember praying by her bedside. I tried to prepare myself for the worst but I couldn't."

"Then I found out how many people were praying for her and I know how strong she is and just hoped and prayed for her to pull through. I can't say how grateful I am to all the people who have written cards and letters to me." During the time his daughter lay critically ill he left her side only once, to attend his wife's funeral. Doctors had expected Charlotte to be in hospital well into the New Year. Mr Anderson said: "Charlotte asked me yesterday: 'Where's my mum?' and I tried to explain to her. All I can imagine is that Nicola must have taken

the full force and Charlotte must have been thrown clear. "Telling Amelia about her mother was the hardest thing I have had to do. I made up a story about how she had to go to heaven. She cried and cried, but was still concerned about her little sister."

Ten people were injured in the crash. Charlotte's mother and Miss Harrison were trapped under the vehicle and carried for 50yd before it hit a wall. The driver has been suspended, pending the outcome of a police inquiry.

Charlotte back home



Charlotte back home

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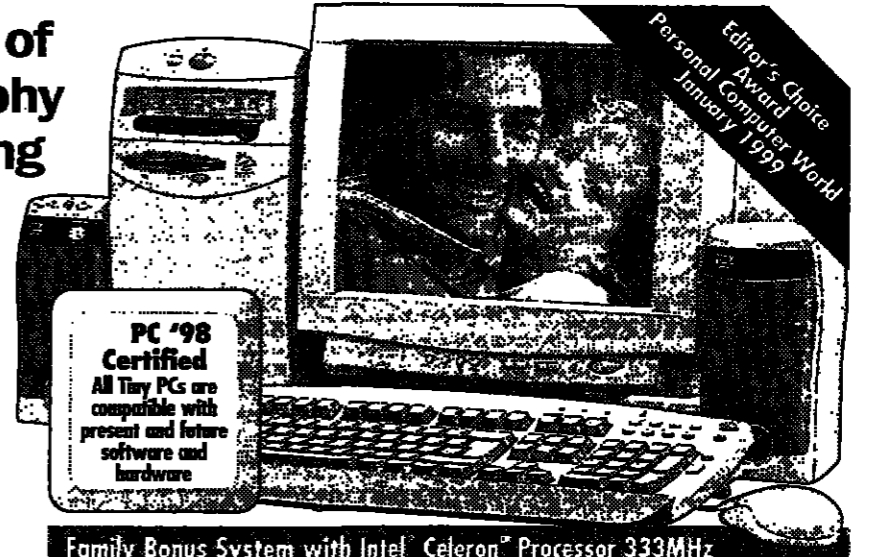
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# Children 'must demand book at bedtime'

By JOHN O'LEARY  
EDUCATION EDITOR

CHILDREN should demand at least ten minutes reading with their parents every evening, David Blunkett said yesterday as the Government endorsed the Free Books for Schools scheme, which begins in *The Times* next month.

The Education and Employment Secretary said that the initiative, which will allow schools to order free books in exchange for tokens in *The Times* and on Walkers crisp packets, would make a valuable contribution to the Government's Year of Reading.

After presenting a full set of the books that will be available under the *Times* scheme to St Matthew's Primary School in Westminster, Mr Blunkett said a revival of interest in reading was under way among children. "We are seeing a big difference in attitudes to reading in school and it should not stop there. Children should demand ten minutes' reading at home."

Mr Blunkett said the Government's literacy hour in primary schools was partly responsible for the renaissance.



More than 25,000 schools have signed up for the free books scheme. Remaining schools have until the end of February to register. Those that register before December 31 will receive 250 starter tokens free. Call 0845 604 0312.

"We are finding that when the hour doesn't take place, the kids are asking why. They already see it as part of their daily diet of learning."

The literacy hour has been criticised by some teaching unions as overprescriptive. But Mr Blunkett said that two gov-

ernment grants of £1,000 to buy books, supplemented by the Free Books for Schools scheme, would provide much-needed variety in the reading material available to children.

"This initiative, together with our own, means that the books have arrived for schools in terms of being able to have the variety of books they have wanted for a long time."

Nicola Conier, the head teacher of St Matthew's, said that the Free Books for Schools scheme would allow the school to buy multiple copies of books for reading lessons, as well as more expensive reference texts. "We are so excited at being able to make such a difference to our book stock. In an area like ours, where not all of the children have books at home, the input of the school is absolutely crucial to give them the grounding they need."

Joe Beaumont, 10, was hoping for horror stories. A fan of the Goosebumps series, he said: "I read at home every night, as well as at school. There aren't enough books at the moment, but I hope we'll get some more stories now."

Civil servants from the neighbouring Department for



David Blunkett at St Matthew's Primary School in Westminster yesterday. He said that a reading revival among children was under way

Education and Employment joined parents and older children at the school to hear the 187 children read. Ms Cotter said: "The children are getting inspired to read, and it's tremendously important to have

a good range of books to offer them." Mr Blunkett recalled his own days of reading to his three children, who are now in their teens and twenties. "I used to make a lot up," he

said, "but the big problem with that is that they want the same story the next night and you can't remember it. My only regret is that I didn't record the stories." Linda Robson, who stars in

the television sitcom *Birds of a Feather*, said that she read regularly to her three children both at home and at school. "I got involved in the scheme because of them. Reading was always going on when I was

growing up and now my 15-year-old and my husband take it in turns to read to my younger children if I am working."

Registration form, page 31

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# Celebrities will join forces for TV appeal

By VICTORIA FLETCHER

THE Duchess of York is to appear in her first British television commercial when she joins a group of well-known faces including Scary Spice and Lord Archer of Weston-super-Mare to encourage the public to start collecting Free Books for Schools tokens.

The advertisement, to be screened from New Year's Day, will feature the duchess cheekily reading an extract from *Princes Charming*. In the 30-second advertisement, she sets the scene in front of an open fire, saying: "Once upon a time, there was a girl who dreamt that she would one day meet a handsome prince..." She concludes the commercial saying: "And they all lived happily ever after..."

Although the duchess has never before appeared in a commercial screened on British television, Americans are used to seeing her advertising Weight Watchers. Membership has risen by 80 per cent since she first appeared. All the celebrities featured in the 30-second advertisement are seen reading a book ironically relevant to their lives. Mel G of the Spice Girls reads the Famous Five tale

*Five get in a Fix*. The successful five-member pop group was reduced to four earlier this year, when arguments between them led to Ginger Spice's departure.

Lord Archer, a contender for the position of Mayor of London, uses his appearance for a tongue-in-cheek attempt to win support. Reading an extract from *Dick Whittington*, he says: "He returned to London, and Dick became Mayor three times..."

The film director and restaurateur Michael Winner is featured feasting on spaghetti while reading *Mr Greedy*, and Gary Lineker sits with his son on his knee reading *Robin Hood* while surreptitiously pinching crisps from him.



The Duchess of York as she appears in the advert

# 'Shop from home' superstore offer

By ROBIN YOUNG

SAFeway and IBM yesterday launched a personalised remote shopping service that will allow customers to order their groceries from home.

The technology, which is being tested at Safeway's superstore in Basingstoke, works through palm-sized electronic organisers called East-Orders. These enable customers to pre-select their groceries from computerised shopping lists compiled from their past purchases.

Sainsbury's offers a similar service at selected stores, where customers can build a shopping catalogue by scanning the bar codes of all the products they think

they might wish to buy. Shopping orders can then be sent by fax or Internet.

The difference is that at Sainsbury's customers have to tour the store scanning bar codes to build their catalogue. Safeway's organisers will in future enable its customers to add items to their shopping list by scanning bar codes at home, even from items that have been bought in other stores. The Safeway East-Orders will also double as personal organisers.

Safeway says that in the next few years customers will be able to order groceries using this technology in televisions or mobile telephones.



# Dome sums up 1,000 years — with a sarnie

By CAROL MIDGLEY  
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

THE idea was simple: think of ten awe-inspiring examples of human achievement to advertise the Millennium Dome. Somehow, a few giant steps had to be overlooked to fit in with the advertisers' vision.

A £1.7 million television campaign to be launched at Christmas pays homage to the creation of the sandwich but ignores developments such as the discovery of penicillin, Darwin's theory of evolution and Newton's discovery of gravity. It salutes Logie Baird's invention of television but not the invention of the steam engine, the car or the jumbo jet.

The achievements narrated by the actor Jeremy Irons in the M&C Saatchi commercial present the past millennium as if it had happened in a single day. Dawn breaks over the statues on Easter Island, which date to the 10th century, and the camera pans to Westminster Abbey, consecrated by Edward the Confessor. By late morning, Michelangelo has painted the roof of the Sistine Chapel and Sir Walter Raleigh helps to bring the potato back from the Americas "in time for lunch".

By the early afternoon, Shakespeare has written his sonnets and the Earl of Sandwich has ordered the first sand-



The sandwich: rated more than penicillin

wich in time for tea. Florence Nightingale and Mother Teresa have shown the world the value of compassion by late afternoon and television has arrived in time for the evening news. Before bedtime, astronauts have landed on the moon, the Berlin Wall has fallen and Apartheid has ended.

As sun sets, Mr Irons reflects: "Imagine what we can do tomorrow."

The ten achievements were chosen after research was carried out on focus groups in Scotland, Manchester and London. Each person nominated landmark developments but not all could be included.

and ITV's *News at Ten*. Young people cited the invention of the Internet as a crucial feature.

The advertisement will be shown first on Christmas Eve. Sholto Douglas-Home, the director of marketing at NMEC, said: "The first phase of our campaign aims to bring a sense of emotion and history to the nation's millennium and to encourage everyone's excitement and sense of awe about what is to come."

"We wanted to link events with the timetable of the day, so Jeremy Irons says that the potato discovery was in time for lunch and the sandwich invention came around tea time. We could have picked literally hundreds of events and they would all have reflected the past 1,000 years."

The commercial is strongly reminiscent of a Greenpeace advertisement which used the same idea of condensing time to demonstrate the impact of human life on the Earth. A Greenpeace spokeswoman said: "As the advertisement shows, humans have achieved great things but we have made a terrible mess along the way."

A spokeswoman for the New Millennium Experience said that among the most popular which did not make the list were the Magna Carta, the Industrial Revolution, the suffragettes, the Battle of Hastings

## Now the farce is with us

By HANNAH BETTS

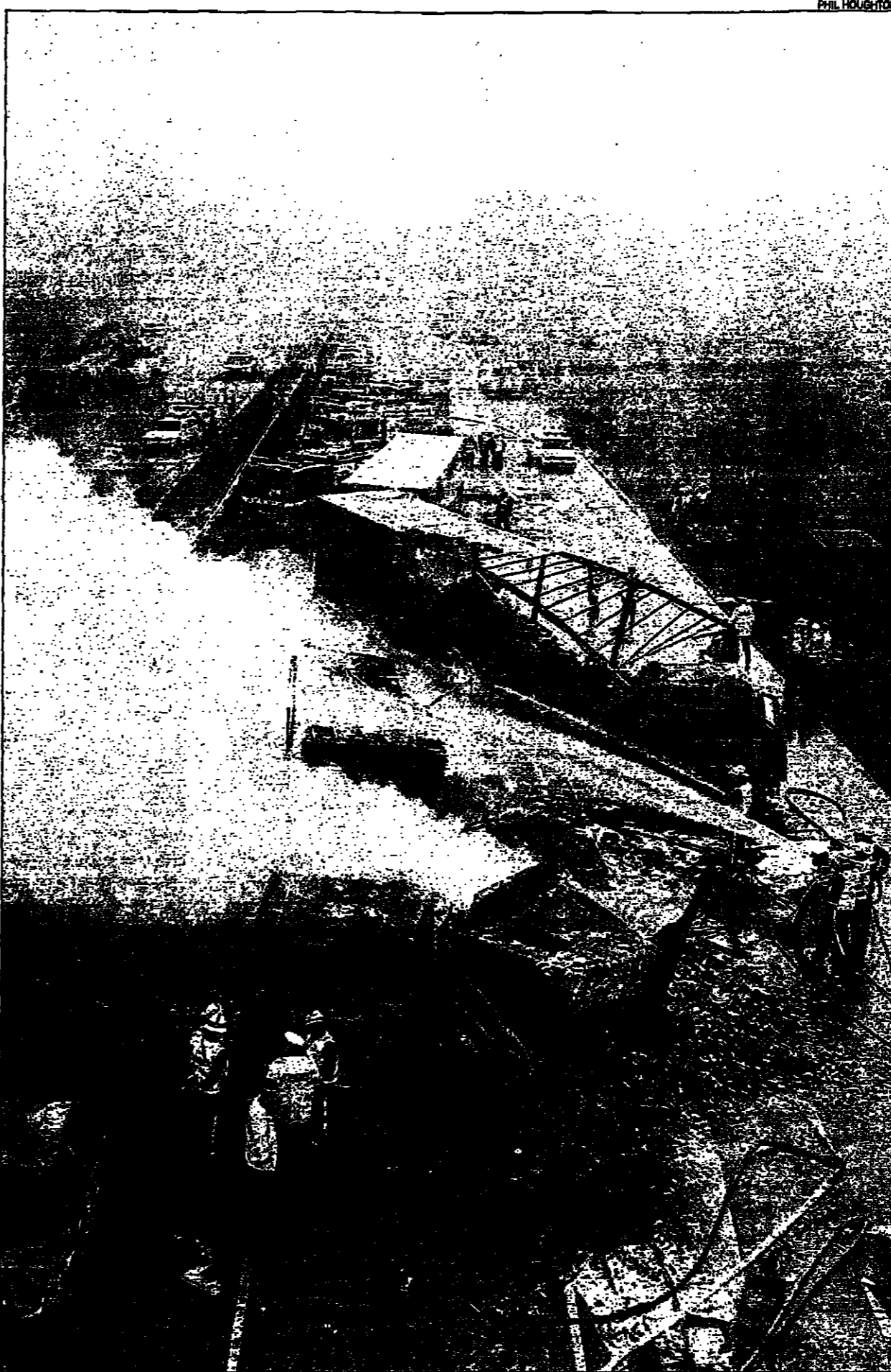
BRITAIN entered a new galaxy yesterday. For the first time, 20th Century Fox held a London premiere for a trailer. The same trailer is already pulling in crowds in America, and now the farce is with us.

Twenty-one years after the first *Star Wars* film opened, they are marketing the much-awaited prequel, *Episode 1: Phantom Menace*. The Odeon in Leicester Square showed

the trailer, lasting 2 minutes and 4 seconds, as it was announced that the George Lucas epic will be released in Britain on July 16, 1999.

Tears welled in the eyes of the mostly 20-something male audience as the first bars of the theme music filled the auditorium. The trailer featured some familiar faces — Yoda, R2D2 and C3PO, all curiously young and sprightly. It was

also the debut for the trilogy's new stars — Liam Neeson, Natalie Portman and Ewan McGregor as the young Obi-Wan-Kenobi. Among the 600 fans at the free screening, Brian Mankin, 28, from the Royal Society of Medicine, said: "It was fantastic. Although it was pretty weird that Yoda looked so young. And weird still that fans age as their heroes grow younger."



The wreckage on the M20. The pile-up happened as drivers started to slow down as they passed a burning lorry

## Two killed in pile-up and fire on foggy motorway

By A CORRESPONDENT

TWO people were killed and eight others injured in an 18-vehicle pile-up and fire in thick fog on the M20 yesterday. The accident happened seconds after a police car stopped to help a lorry driver whose engine had caught fire on the hard shoulder of the motorway near Ashford, Kent, about 7am.

The 18 vehicles, including five lorries, had started to slow down as they passed the burning lorry, but 12 of them collided a short distance further towards London. A further six crashed and caught fire as they tried to avoid the burning wreckage.

Nine fire brigade vehicles were called to the scene, and the crew of a specialist heavy rescue vehicle based at the Channel Tunnel worked for 2½ hours to free a French driver from his burning lorry.

Kent Police said that a man travelling in a transit van had been killed instantly and that another man, thought to be the French lorry driver, had died on the way to hospital. Six other people were treated for minor injuries at the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford.

The pile-up brought the busy motorway and surrounding roads to a standstill. The fires created a thick haze over the scene and nearby residents were warned to close their windows against the acid smoke. Fire crews cut a section of the central crash barrier away to enable vehicles travelling on the London-bound carriageway to turn around.

Inspector Chris Keeley, of Kent Police, said that both fog and speed were believed to have played a part in the pile-up. "It was dark and foggy and visibility was down to about 25 and 50 yards... Obviously they were going too fast for the conditions," he said.

The accident happened on a stretch of the motorway where traffic police last weekend caught 50 drivers speeding at up to 111 mph. The speed trap was set up because the stretch of road had been the scene of accidents and traffic problems.

# THE JERMYN STREET GOLF OPEN

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# Efficiency savings to free £10bn for 'People's priorities'

By VALERIE ELLIOTT  
WHITEHALL EDITOR

AN extra £10 billion is to be allocated to frontline public services such as schools and patient care after ministers and the Treasury agreed to meet stringent new efficiency standards.

Stephen Byers, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, will outline to MPs today the scale of the assault

on red tape, absenteeism and fraud which will free more money. He has negotiated 25 public service contracts setting a total of about 500 performance and efficiency targets, mostly to be met within three years. They include:

- 50 per cent of all 16 year olds to gain five good GCSEs.
- Number of 11 year olds passing literacy tests to go up from 65 per cent to 75 per cent.

- Number of deaths of under-65s by heart attack and stroke to be reduced by 33 per cent
- Car crime to be cut by 30 per cent (within five years).

- Number of rough sleepers to be reduced by two thirds.
- Length of time for young offenders to be dealt with by the courts to be halved from 142 to 71 days.

Government departments have pledged to try to eliminate wasteful

spending, to organise better-value purchasing contracts and to reduce sickness rates, which could be costing the country up to £6 billion.

Recent figures have shown that staff in half of all Whitehall departments are off sick between ten and 14 days a year. The average in the private sector is said to be about seven days. A similar scrutiny on purchase costs showed that in one instance it cost £60 to order a light-

bulb. The NHS is aiming to make savings of 5 per cent and reallocate £1 billion to patient care. Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, has pledged to cut costs of management and NHS trusts.

The Ministry of Defence is planning to make £2 billion savings, the bulk of which is expected to come from tougher procurement contracts with suppliers.

Mr Byers believes the new agree-

ments will hold ministers more publicly accountable. He said this week: "Each public service agreement will have a named minister responsible for delivering the improved public service. They might not have to resign, but they may have to explain why they have not met these targets."

He promised that the Treasury would help departments to meet the targets which he said were "Peo-

ple's priorities". He believes the new-style public spending deals will also bring a new culture in Whitehall and the wider public services, break down traditional secrecy and generally raise standards.

A Treasury source said: "If departments are not keeping up to scratch the committee will hold them to account. The public are going to be amazed by the detail."

## Cook lets fly at MPs over arms inquiry

ROBIN COOK yesterday told MPs investigating the arms-to-Africa affair that they had not discovered anything new (Valerie Elliott writes).

The Foreign Secretary defended his decision to set up an independent inquiry under Sir Thomas Legg, QC, and his refusal to allow the Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee to take the lead role. The Legg report cleared ministers and officials of conniving with Sandline International, military consultants to supply arms to forces loyal to President Kabbah of Sierra Leone in breach of UN sanctions.

However, Sir Peter Emery, a Tory member, called the report a whitewash and Donald Anderson, the committee chairman, told Mr Cook: "It could be argued that everything that could have gone wrong, seems to have gone wrong in this sad affair."

The committee is to produce its own report in the new year and is expected to call for greater powers. In angry exchanges, Mr Cook told the committee: "I don't think in your hearings you have uncovered a single material fact that is not in Legg."

## Hague's rating falls after clash with Cranborne

By PETER RIDDELL

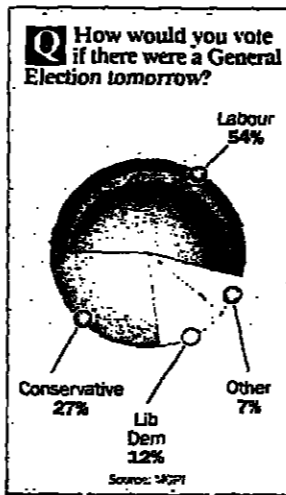
WILLIAM HAGUE'S public image has suffered, rather than improved, after his sacking of Viscount Cranborne, the former Tory leader of the Lords, according to the latest MORI poll for *The Times*.

The poll, undertaken last weekend, dashes Tory hopes that Mr Hague's assertion of leadership over the future of the Lords would mark a turning-point and increase his public standing. After improving in the early autumn, his personal approval rating has fallen back since late November.

The balance of the public satisfied with his performance as Tory leader has deteriorated from minus 21 to minus 27 points (24 to 51 per cent). Even among Tory supporters, his rating has declined from minus 9 to minus 15 points. This is despite claims by the Tory leadership that most MPs and local parties strongly support Mr Hague's dismissal of Lord Cranborne.

Tory support has slipped by two points to 27 per cent since late November, while Labour is one point up at 54 per cent. The Liberal Democrats are down one point at 12 per cent.

The poll shows that Mr Hague and the Tories have failed to make any inroads during 1998 upon Labour's dominant position in the polls. The



ratings of the two main parties and the personal ratings of the party leaders are virtually the same as at the beginning of the year.

The public is satisfied rather than dissatisfied with Tony Blair's performance as Prime Minister by a two-to-one margin (60 to 29 per cent), with Labour supporters 84 to 11 per cent in his favour. These ratings are virtually unchanged over the month and since the start of the year.

Moreover, more people are still satisfied rather than dissatisfied with the way the Government is running the country — by a 46 to 40 per cent

margin. These favourable ratings are despite the public's increased worries since the spring about the economic outlook. The MORI economic optimism index — measuring the proportion believing that the general economic condition will improve over the next 12 months — now stands at minus 30 points. This is at the same level as the minus 31 points in late November, but represents a big deterioration since the minus 4 points of December a year ago.

These findings suggest that the public is still prepared to give the Government the benefit of the doubt. The poll also indicates that Mr Blair and the Government have not suffered from the recent row over European tax harmonisation.

This is even though the number of people mentioning Europe as among the most important issues facing Britain today has risen from 26 to 32 per cent since late November, the highest level since October last year.

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,864 adults at 155 sampling points across Britain on December 11 to 14. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population and exclude those who say they would not vote (10 per cent), were undecided (8 per cent) or who refused to say (1 per cent).



Donald Dewar, the Scottish Secretary, signing the order that will bring the Scotland Act 1998 into force, paving the way for the Holyrood parliament to open next year

## Proposals for abuse register may become law

By ROLAND WATSON  
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PROPOSALS to establish a register of teachers and care workers to protect children from physical and mental abuse could become law by the middle of next year.

Local authorities and other employers would have to consult the list before hiring staff who worked with or around children. They would also have to pass on names of people they suspected of being unsuitable for work with children, even if they had no criminal convictions.

The measures were adopted yesterday by Debra Shipley, the Labour MP for Stourbridge who came top of this year's ballot of Private Members' Bills. They are supported by Frank Dobson, the Health Secretary, and therefore stand a very good chance of reaching the statute book in the current session of Parliament.

The Department of Health currently oversees an advisory list that employers can consult. But one of the main criticisms is that local authorities are not obliged to pass on concerns about employees, which can encourage them to cover up abuse by dismissing the employee concerned, who then takes a similar job elsewhere.

Under the terms of the Bill, the register would be kept by the Health Secretary and employers would be legally obliged to log all individuals who were the subject of incidents or concerns.

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# French experts chew over new dinosaur find

**Ben Macintyre reports on a rare discovery by amateur fossil hunters**

THE remains of a previously unknown species of aggressive flesh-eating dinosaur have been discovered in the heart of Provence, proving that 70 million years ago the French region celebrated by British writer Peter Mayle was not always such a peaceful haven.

The newly-discovered dinosaur is a type of raptor, a cousin of the vicious *Velociraptor* that was made famous by Steven Spielberg's film, *Jurassic Park*, which moved around on powerful hind legs and dispatched its prey with an impressive array of multiple canines. The prehistoric beast was discovered at Fox-Amphoux in the Var by two amateur fossil hunters, Patrick and Annie Mécchin and named *Variraptor machinorum* after the southern region and its finders.

The *Variraptor*, 6ft long and weighing 100lb, was slightly smaller than its Asian cousin, the *Velociraptor*, and the North American variety, the *Utahraptor*. Palaeontologists

believe that the dinosaur may have fed partly on carrion, but it was also a fearsome hunter, running down smaller animals at speed, grabbing them with its powerful talons and devouring them.

The teeth, backbone and humerus of a single *Variraptor* have so far been unearthed in the hills behind Marseilles, along with a number of bones from herbivorous dinosaurs bearing the unmistakable imprint of the fearsome denizen of *Variraptor*.

The new dinosaur may also have had the habit of eating the young of other dinosaur species.

In *Toujours Provence*, Mayle depicted a tranquil French idyll and attracted millions of British tourists to the region.

But the latest research by palaeontologists suggests that 70 million years ago the place was seething with dinosaurs. "Provence was once a dinosaurs' paradise," *Le Figaro* reported.

The Mécchins, who have been hunting dinosaur remains in Provence for the past 25 years, have brought to light the *Gargantuavis*, a large running bird, and a sort of prehistoric tortoise called *Foxemys*.

The discovery of the *Variraptor*, however, may lead to even larger prey.

Near the *Variraptor* dig, the couple found the imprint of a jawbone at least three times as large as that of the smaller hunter with teeth like "sabre blades" in long.

This, says Mécchin, may be a clue to the existence of the largest beast to stalk France in prehistoric times, the fabled



A model of the head of the newly discovered *Variraptor* and, below, a re-creation based on the Provençal remains

and as yet undiscovered Southern Tyrannosaurus. For some commentators in France, the discovery that the country was once an enormous Jurassic Park has become a source of patriotic pride.

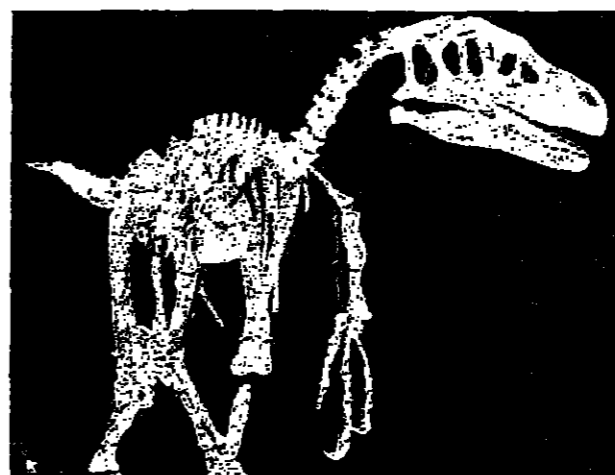
"No, dinosaurs are not an American speciality on the same level as hamburgers," *Le Figaro* crowed yesterday as the discovery of France's very own raptor was announced.

Eric Buffetaut, chief palaeontologist at the National Centre for Scientific Research, said that only half a dozen dinosaurs peculiar to Europe have been identified so far but that many more remain to be found.

"In most popular depictions, you only get North American dinosaurs, no doubt because their discovery is made more spectacular."

"In France, for example, you do not get many beasts with horns but many lizards with long tails," M Buffetaut said.

The *Plateosaurus*, a huge herbivorous beast 24ft long, was particularly common in eastern France between the Jura range and Lorraine, while the carnivorous biped *Megalosaurus*, first identified in 1835, was to be found in parts of Normandy moving at what was, for a 1.5 tonne dinosaur, the remarkable speed of 5mph.



# Fugitive under house arrest

FROM JAN RAATH IN HARARE

ZIMBABWE'S former President, the Rev Canaan Banana, was placed under house arrest here yesterday, less than 12 hours after returning to the country to face his conviction for homosexual assault and sodomy.

His return follows an agreement between President Mandela of South Africa, where he was in hiding, and President Mugabe. The two leaders met here on Sunday.

Banana, 62, was handed over by South African security officials to police on the Zimbabwean border on Tuesday. He appeared yesterday in the High Court here, where he said he had left Zimbabwe because he was in possession "of dangerous information" which "I had to share with my real friends".

He is to appear before Judge Godfrey Chidyausiku next week to be sentenced on 11 counts of homosexual assault, sodomy and common assault, and also to answer charges of jumping bail and leaving the country illegally.

# Gems finance Unita attack

BY SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

BACKED by mercenaries and rearmen with funds from illegal diamond exports, Jonas Savimbi's Unita rebels have taken advantage of a commitment of government troops to the conflict in the neighbouring Democratic Republic of Congo to return Angola to civil war.

Battles close to the headquarters of Dr Savimbi's Unita movement in Bailundo and Andulo in the central highlands have stymied Angolan commanders, whose plans to attack Unita were postponed by the Congo intervention, according to Savimbi's spokesman.

Units have been sent to more troops than we imagined, and they have got specialist mercenaries working on their side, South African and Moroccan," the source said. "We did not expect this kind of sophistication, and heavy weaponry," he added. Bloodied by the fighting in the highlands, government forces have also been forced from positions around Cuito, capital of Bie province, which was devastated by fighting in 1993.

A year later, Dr Savimbi signed the Lusaka accord,

which committed Unita to disband its force of about 30,000 and to participation in politics.

But Dr Savimbi's ego, and earnings of about £2.5 billion from illegal diamond exports from the alluvial fields under his control over the past six years, meant that the deal has been ignored by Unita, which has spent its fortune on military hardware. According to Global Witness, a London-based rights organisation which recently published a study of the diamond trade in Angola, most gems smuggled out of Angola and sold mostly in the United States and Europe, were bought in the

country against Unita. De Beers, which controls the Central Selling Organisation (CSO) diamond cartel, has denied knowingly buying such diamonds. Andrew Lamont, a spokesman, said: "This is a charge De Beers vehemently denies. De Beers does not buy diamonds from Unita."

Company sources have confirmed that an expert dealer is capable of identifying the provenance of the diamond. "In the CSO buys about 80 per cent of world production,

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# Muted 100-member jury would have to decide Clinton's fate

By TIM HAMES

## IMPEACHMENT

THE United States Senate prides itself on its sense of institutional integrity. With relatively few members — 100 — serving relatively long terms (six years), it has the atmosphere of a club as much as a legislative chamber. It has developed powerful notions of mutual respect and collective courtesy that have long disappeared in the more partisan and raucous House of Representatives.

Newt Gingrich could not have risen to the Senate leadership. Even in the mass-media age, the Senate functions much as the founding fathers intended. There is, therefore, no doubt that the Senate would take its duty to conduct the trial of a President exceptionally seriously. There is little chance of anything less than detailed consideration of the evidence. Most members have been

lawyers and a few are acknowledged constitutional experts. The optimists believe that a Senate trial might take six weeks. The realists fear that Americans will be fortunate to avoid a Clinton trial of less than three months. The events that might unfold next month would be extraordinary even by the standards of the Senate. In all impeachment cases except that of the President, it falls to the Vice-President to chair proceedings. This presents the curious constitutional anomaly that if

Vice-President Al Gore were impeached by the House of Representatives he would preside over his own trial in the Senate. If Mr Clinton is impeached, it will fall to William Rehnquist, the US Chief Justice, who is an intelligent, ideological and witty man, to take charge of matters. Chief Justice Rehnquist would be more than a mere chairman. He would decide on virtually all matters of process. The prosecution team would be drawn from the House Judiciary Committee.

Mr Clinton can appoint his own defence team. They would have the authority to call key witnesses for cross-examination. Legions of other learned figures would doubtless be summoned to determine whether whatever Mr Clinton did or did not do met the standard of "high crimes and misdemeanours" that are set out in the US Constitution. Through all of this, the Senate would be obliged to sit, silent, as a 100-member jury. Any questions that they might wish to submit

must be handed in writing to the Chief Justice. Otherwise the entire chamber would have to remain still, seated behind ancient desks, as much prisoners of the process as Mr Clinton. The wider audience will be the American people. While polls still suggest that at least 60 per cent want the President to remain in office, the intensity of that support is open to question. Some Republicans believe that the spotlight of an impeachment trial would convince all but the most committed

that the President was guilty of perjury. They think that the aura of the Chief Justice and the Senate will make it impossible for the Democrats to paint proceedings as a partisan show trial. Other Republicans fear that their party is courting disaster. The White House has wagered that, however much many moderate Republicans may distrust this President, the prospect of a Washington equivalent of the CJ Simpson circus will be enough to save Mr Clinton.

# Battle to woo the waverers proves futile

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

EVEN for the most famous working home in America, yesterday was extraordinary.

As President Clinton's senior military advisers were being ushered in and out of his presence for talks on possible military strikes against the Iraqi regime, his political aides were running around desperately trying to line up Republican moderates for meetings with Mr Clinton in the Oval Office, where his troubles with Monica Lewinsky began.

The last-ditch battle was for the hearts and minds of congressmen wavering over whether to vote for or against impeachment after today's planned debate in the House of Representatives. The difficulty was finding anyone who would listen to his appeals. More Republicans who had been considered "persuadable" by the White House went before the cameras for their cameos in the drama yesterday and announced that they had decided to vote to impeach Mr Clinton on at least one of the four articles they will be considering today.

Republican leaders were increasingly confident that a majority of the 435 members of the House would vote to send him for trial in the Senate for high crimes and misdemeanours. Christopher Shays, a Connecticut Republican who

## CLIFFHANGER

had opposed impeachment but then started to have doubts, was due to meet Mr Clinton last night. He is regarded as the leader of the fast-diminishing group of Republicans who could save Mr Clinton in the cliffhanger vote and the White House had pleaded with him to bring colleagues along. However, he was said to be "pessimistic" that he could rustle up many of his peers.

Mr Shays met 2,000 constituents on Tuesday. They appeared to be evenly split on how he should vote. "The impeachable offences, if I had to vote tonight, have not been proven," he told the crowd. "And the proven offences are not impeachable," he said, but added: "It's darned close."

Joe Lockhart, the White House spokesman, said that there were no plans for any dramatic overtures by the President such as another speech to the nation aimed at averting impeachment.

But in another corner of the White House, Vice-President Al Gore led the public defence of the President. Unprompted, he began a meeting on small businesses by insisting that the President should not resign but that some form of cen-

sure should be agreed on by both sides. "I believe on Capitol Hill there is still time for Democrats and Republicans to come together and embrace a bipartisan compromise to seek a resolution that is both quick and fair," he said.

He was speaking after the release of a 500-page report by the House Judiciary Committee justifying the four articles of impeachment it approved last week along party lines.

It concluded that President Clinton "disgraced himself and the high office he holds", adding: "His high crimes and misdemeanours undermine our Constitution."

A supporter of a lesser punishment, a Republican representative from Delaware, Michael Castle, said he had all but given up on convincing his party's leaders to allow a vote on a harsh censure resolution and a \$2 million (£1.2 million) fine for the President.

There was still optimism among Democrats last night that they could use a device known as a "motion to recommit with instructions" to force a censure vote in the House today. However, it is uncertain whether Charles Johnson, the impartial House official who rules on procedure, would allow this and whether it would persuade enough Republicans to abandon impeachment.



Students at Harvard University show their feelings outside a pro-Clinton rally. A handful of House votes will decide the President's future

# White House haunted by echoes of past

By DAMIAN WHITWORTH

A FEW days ago President Clinton was showing a small group around the Oval Office, pointing out the treasures when he picked up a small marble sculpture of Franklin Roosevelt. "One of my favourite Presidents," said Mr Clinton. But the great wartime leader is not the only political giant who watches over Mr Clinton as he works.

On his desk are busts of Kennedy, Truman and Churchill. The 42nd President cares deeply about history, and his place in it. He will be acutely aware that this is about to be determined.

It would be a remarkable feat of self-delusion to think that his presidency will be remembered primarily for anything other than the Monica Lewinsky scandal. But a handful of votes, planned for today, will decide whether or not he enters the annals of American history as the second President to be impeached by the House of Representatives and sent for trial in the Senate for high crimes and misdemeanours.

Mr Clinton has been linked throughout this scandal to the only other President this century to face an impeachment investigation. Richard Nixon resigned a few days after the House Judiciary Committee returned three articles of impeachment against him.

Mr Clinton is unlikely to resign. Nor is there much likelihood that the requisite two thirds of the Senate will find him guilty and sling him out of the White House. But the very act of impeaching him will ensure that he is forever bracketed with an unpopular and ineffective 19th-century President who escaped removal from office by the skin of his teeth.

In 1868 Andrew Johnson was impeached, not for anything arising from a scandalous personal life, but because of a disastrous relationship with Congress. But there are some remarkable similarities between the characters of the two Presidents and how they

wound up in such perilous predicaments.

Like Mr Clinton, Johnson was a Southerner from humble beginnings. Like Mr Clinton, he was a political prodigy; he too was a gifted and persuasive orator, who became an alderman in his home town of Greeneville, Tennessee, aged just 21. He was Mayor, member of the House, Governor and Senator before Lincoln made him Vice-President as part of the Union Party ticket in the 1864 election, towards the end of the Civil War.

After Lincoln's death, Johnson was faced with the huge challenge of reconstructing the South and proved himself unequal to the task in a catalogue of recklessness. But while Mr Clinton's wildness manifested itself in his personal life, Johnson was politically rash. He lacked the popularity that has probably saved Mr Clinton. When he went on a speaking tour in 1866, he made ill-judged at-

## TRIAL PRECEDENT

tacks on his enemies and was heckled. He also had to struggle against rumours that he was a drunkard after appearing at his inauguration having consumed too much liquor.

He clashed with Congress by repeatedly vetoing plans for reconstruction in the South that aimed to achieve racial equality by imposing strict political, legal, and constitutional requirements on the Confederate states. The House was provoked and when Johnson dismissed his Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, it moved to impeach him.

The trial in the Senate caused unprecedented excitement and the vote was a cliff-hanger, as close as the one that Mr Clinton faces, possibly today. One senator who had suffered a stroke was carried by four men into the chamber, where he managed to croak "not guilty". Johnson avoided conviction by two thirds of the Senate by just one vote and survived in office.

## PRESIDENT 'CANONISED' BY IRISH

Dublin. While Bill Clinton braced himself yesterday for a 70- three-quarter-home impeachment vote in the US Congress, the President's Irish supporters were poised to honour him with a larger-than-life bronze statue. While they're cranking up the Washington, we're going to canonise him in Balbriggan. Frank O'Riordan says he was prepared to put up a 70- three-quarter-home statue at the west coast golfing arena where Mr Clinton rounded off an official visit in September. The statue will be transported from Dublin today. A bronze-dipped plastercast version was put up for a day for the Clinton visit. (Reuters)

# Which of us will get Alzheimer's?

If you live into your old age, you have a one in five chance of developing Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. At the moment it's difficult to tell just who will get the disease. But the Alzheimer's Disease Society is dedicated not just to lowering the risk, but to completely eradicating it. To do that we need your help. Some of the research we've invested in has already brought scientists closer to finding a cure. Until then, we're here to support those for whom a cure will come too late — and their families. Please give £20 today and give 4 people information and support through our Helpline, or help us find the cure to give future generations freedom from dementia. I'll remember those who can't

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# Saddam crisis may sway vote to impeach Clinton

FROM IAN BRIDIE IN WASHINGTON

IN A surreal convergence of events, President Clinton huddled with top advisers to plan a military response to Iraq's latest rebuff of UN arms inspectors yesterday while other aides lobbied for support to tuck aside the planned congressional impeachment vote.

Republican leaders held an emergency meeting on Capitol Hill to discuss possible postponement of the scheduled debate and vote on impeaching the President if by then he had ordered US forces to launch an air assault on Iraq.

They cannot hold back for long because the life of this Congress expires at the end of the month and members from around the country would not want to be confined in Washington over Christmas. White House aides insisted that the President Clinton would not allow his own domestic political peril to affect any decisions that he would make in relation to the crisis in Iraq.

Henry Hyde, the Republican chairman of the House Judiciary Committee that passed the four articles of impeachment against Mr Clinton, said he thought it would be awkward to hold a vote to impeach the President during any bombing of Iraq.

His comment was a vivid reminder that when the US embarks on a war-like action, the President is the Commander-in-Chief and the first instinct of patriotic Americans is to support him.

It may be very convenient for Mr Clinton that another showdown with President Saddam Hussein has arrived, just as his political future was faltering on the brink of impeachment. Certainly an attack on Iraq, considered long overdue by many Americans, would boost his popularity and enhance his image as a leader who is not afraid to take bold decisions.

But James Rubin, the State Department spokesman, dismissed suggestions that the impeachment moves over the Monica Lewinsky affair might affect the Administration's decision-making in Iraq. Whatever wags might say, he remarked, the current crisis was determined by Iraq, not by events in Washington.

The official US line, voiced by Mr Rubin, was that there was no ground for optimism that the Iraqi leadership would suddenly comply with UN demands for inspection of its weapons sites in the new year nor, if it remained in power, the new millennium.

"There is no end in sight for this pattern of obfuscation, obstruction or outright violation," said Mr Rubin, who described the situation as "grave". He declined to discuss whether Mr Clinton might order a military strike which the President has said could take place without further warning. Asked what could happen next, Mr Rubin said: "Stay tuned."

The latest report of Iraq's non-compliance with the UN weapons inspectors brought a shudder to officials already overloaded by the strains of the impeachment battle.

Mr Clinton, who had stepped off his plane from Israel after 10pm on Tuesday, was in the White House situation room by 7.30am yesterday for a full rundown on developments concerning Iraq. With him were Madeleine Albright, the Secretary of State, Samuel Berger, the National Security Adviser, William Cohen, the Defence Secretary, and General Hugh Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A White House aide said they spent 45 minutes discussing the "very serious situation" presented by the report to the Security Council from Richard Butler, the chairman of the UN weapons team, that there had been "no progress" on disarmament and "new forms of restrictions" placed on inspectors since Saddam's pledge of full co-operation on November 14.

An Administration official said the Butler report contained specific details of how the inspectors could not get full co-operation and therefore were called off with only 15 minutes to spare. Mr Blair endorsed Mr Clinton's position and said Britain would join the US in launching air strikes without warning if Saddam failed to keep his word.



Bill, Hillary and Chelsea Clinton disembark from Air Force One after travelling home from their Middle East trip

### MILITARY ACTION

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### WORLD IN BRIEF

## Russian orphans face daily abuse

Moscow: Routine neglect and abuse at orphanages across the Russian Federation are the subject of a Human Rights Watch report (Anna Blundy writes). There are more than 200,000 children abandoned to the supposed care of Russian state institutions and, of the 15,000 children who leave orphanages every year, 5,000 will soon be unemployed, 6,000 will be homeless, 3,000 will have a criminal record and 1,000 will commit suicide, according to the Russian General Procuracy.

Everyday punishments include pushing a child's head inside a lavatory, squeezing hands in a vice, squeezing testicles during interrogation, stripping children naked in front of their peers and sending them to psychiatric institutions as a punishment for trying to run away. Many of the "difficult" children are put in straitjackets at all times, says the report.

## Genocide accusation

Madrid: The former head of Spain's Communist Party, Santiago Carrillo, 83, is the latest victim of a spate of private genocide cases being brought in the wake of attempts to extradite General Augusto Pinochet, the former dictator of Chile, from Britain to face similar charges (Giles Tremlett writes). Señor Carrillo is accused by relatives of involvement in the death or disappearance of up to 10,000 political prisoners at Paracuellos de Jarama more than 50 years ago during the civil war.

## Le Pen sacks 14 rebels

Paris: Jean-Marie Le Pen, the far-right leader, purged 14 regional party leaders who sided with his rebel deputy, Bruno Mégret, in an attempt to remove him. Another party statement said the rebels call for an extraordinary party congress, which could vote M Le Pen out of office as party chairman, was "a subversive operation which National Front members cannot accept". The Front split this month over preparations for next June's European Parliament elections. (Reuters)

## Australia countdown

Canberra: Australians will vote next year, probably in November, on whether to cut constitutional ties with Britain. Daryl Williams, the Attorney-General, announced. The referendum legislation is expected to be introduced into parliament in mid-1999 — 211 years after the arrival of the first white settlers from Britain. Opinion polls show the majority of Australians favour replacing the country's constitutional monarch, the Queen, with an Australian President. (Reuters)

## China doubles its age

Beijing: China, which claims it has 5,000 years of civilisation behind it, could rewrite history to double its age, the official Xinhua news agency said. A group of historians from China and Taiwan have asked for changes in history books to make clear that China has boasted a "high level of civilisation" for about 10,000 years, Xinhua said. Historians claim the Yellow River basin is no longer considered the sole cradle of ancient China and other regions may have shared the honour. (AFP)

## 'Dog collar' coats ban

Burlington: The Burlington Coat Factory pulled hundreds of parkas from its stores after finding out they were trimmed with dog fur. The Humane Society of the United States objected after a report that there was an extensive international trade in pets of domestic dogs. The supplier admitted the coats included fur from dogs in China. (AP)

# Partygoers just love Lewinsky

FROM GILES WHITTILL IN WASHINGTON

MONICA LEWINSKY has become the season's unluckiest social catch. When she made a surprise appearance at a Manhattan Christmas party on Tuesday night, fellow guests practically queued up to introduce themselves.

Ms Lewinsky chose the venue for her unannounced debut on the New York party circuit with a fine sense of irony: it was at a Christmas function hosted by the film production company behind *Slingblade* — the Oscar-nominated debut of Billy Bob Thornton, one of President Clinton's Hollywood friends.

Arriving fashionably late, with her mother and two



Monica Lewinsky, who attracted New York crowds

### THE SOCIALITE

female companions, the world's best-known jobseeker made at once for a prime window table at The Shooting Gallery's party premises in a high-rise building in the city's Chelsea district.

Having been hounded for a year and now bound to a lucrative "exclusive" interview contract with Channel 4, Ms Lewinsky was understandably reluctant to talk to the press. But to a reporter from the New York Post she managed: "I appreciate anything nice that someone says to me."

Despite her reputation for shapeless, pastel working clothes, she wore a black blazer, black shirt and ankle-length black skirt, showing an

awareness of the severe look that remains *de rigueur* at New York parties — even Christmas ones. Either that, or she was in premonitory mourning for Mr Clinton.

Ms Lewinsky has been spotted recently on a Manhattan shopping expedition with her mother, and struggling with a

cash machine on the Upper West Side. Her half-hearted efforts at disguise have been entirely in vain. The sightings were phoned in instantly to the press, as was a similar one last week in California.

Staying with her father in Brentwood, Ms Lewinsky visited Fred Segal, an achingly

trendy mini-mall in Santa Monica patronised by the likes of Ed Harris, Uma Thurman and Tracey Ullman. Her presence alone was enough to turn heads. Then she homed in on the kind of black beret she has made her hallmark, and bought another.

How the American public will react when Ms Lewinsky's first American interview is broadcast on ABC is a question likely to decide the future course of her life. If credible and sympathetic, she has a future in television as a host or even commentator, experts say. But should she come across as, by turns, deluded, predatory and spoilt — as Mr Clinton's defenders currently perceive her — she will be relegated to clerical work and hard-won privacy at best.

She will be interviewed by Barbara Walters, doyenne of the televised confessional, who began preparing her audience last month: "I'm not here to be her public-relations person," Ms Walters said, "but she has been vilified."

Viewers can expect a warmly lit, semi-scripted chat with only token harsh questions to justify Ms Walters's status as a figurehead of ABC's news division.

Ms Lewinsky could do worse than study the famous interview of Diana, Princess of Wales, on *Panorama*, once described as a "masterpiece of confessional jujitsu". Asked if she had been unfaithful with Major James Hewitt, the Princess replied: "Yes, I adored him. Yes, I was in love with him. But I was very let down."

# Technology assault on the Hill

FROM DAMIAN WHITWORTH IN WASHINGTON

THE resurrection of impeachment as an issue, and the prospect of the planned diffidence vote, have galvanised Americans on both sides into furious lobbying that has brought chaos to Capitol Hill.

The Republican moderates who will decide Mr Clinton's fate have been besieged in every way by modern technology will allow. Telephonic operating systems have jammed. Computer systems have crashed under the deluge of e-mails. Piles of faxes have been building on the floors of harassed staffers.

Many representatives plotting with each other in the fevered atmosphere that engulfs the capital, were last night

### LOBBYING

forced to communicate within Congress by mobile telephone because the in-house system was so busy that they could only reach each other's answerphones. Junior members of offices were being assigned to work late clearing e-mails out of computers and keeping fax machines stocked with paper and toner. Christopher Shays, a Connecticut Republican who was meeting the President last night, received more than 12,000 e-mails in a morning.

With all other forms of communication snarled up, telegrams became the order of the day. The Western Union office on Capitol Hill said it had processed


12,000 in recent days, as many as during the hearings on the Supreme Court nominee, Clarence Thomas.

A common complaint from representatives wanting to listen to their constituents before making up their minds how to vote was that they had to filter the messages to find those that were genuinely from inhabitants of their districts. "Of the calls we are getting in the office, about half are astrofart and half are real," said one staffer, using Washington-speak for calls from lobby groups.

Some of the outsiders are easy to spot. The actor Robert De Niro, is among the celebrities who have been calling Republicans, asking them to vote against impeachment, while all manner of groups have been lobbying for the other side.

# Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year

May we take this opportunity to tell our friends that, once again this year, we are not sending Christmas cards. Instead, we're making donations to several local branch charities, including Macmillan Nurses and NSPCC.



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# Dawn collapse kills up to 40 in Rome flats

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN ROME

UP TO 40 people are feared dead after a five-storey block of flats collapsed in a Rome inner-city district before dawn yesterday. About 12 hours later rescue workers pulled two survivors from the rubble. The pair, a man and a woman in their sixties, were taken to hospital for a check-up.

Firemen, police and civil defence workers digging with their bare hands had pulled out 13 bodies by mid-afternoon, three of them children, Colonel Sabino Cavaliere, the commander of the Rome Carabinieri, said.

Hope was fading for those still trapped under tonnes of concrete which was only about three feet high. Rescuers thought it could take two days to find all the victims.

The Mayor of Rome, Francesco Rutelli, believed the total toll was higher and indicated

that national authorities might be underplaying the disaster, fearing they might be accused of being too slow in the rescue. "There may be more than 30 people under the masonry, including several children: it's a terrible figure," Signor Rutelli said at the scene in the Portuense district.

Firefighters ruled out a gas explosion, a common cause of such disasters in Italy, and said recent work on the ground floor appeared to have precipitated the implosion.

The Pope, speaking as Bishop of Rome to pilgrims in his weekly general audience, expressed "deep pain" at the collapse. Among the dead were the mother, father and two brothers of a firefighter taking part in the rescue. Ferruccio Fumasselli, 34, said: "When we pulled out Papa, Mamma and my two brothers, Steffino and

Massimiliano, it seemed as if they were sleeping."

"They called me at 3.30am saying that a block had collapsed in Portuense. I thought it was a joke. But when I arrived I understood."

Massimo D'Alerno, the Prime Minister, ordered Rosa Russo Jervolino, the Interior Minister, to take control of rescue operations, but she strongly denied there was any cover-up over the loss of human life. Such tragedies are sensitive in Italy because of a widespread belief that many, such as the summer mudslides that killed more than 300 people in southern Italy, could be avoided if there was less public sector corruption and inefficiency.

Signor Rutelli declared Sunday a day of mourning in the city and said that Christmas lights would be extinguished in tribute to the dead.



Rescuers in a Rome suburb survey all that was left of the five-storey building, home for 16 families before its sudden collapse yesterday

# Turkish alarm as Italy 'frees' Kurd leader

BY JOHN PHILLIPS

DIPLOMATIC relations between Italy and Turkey worsened yesterday as an Italian court of appeal ruled that Abdullah Ocalan, the Kurdish guerrilla leader, was a free man.

But Massimo D'Alerno, the Italian Prime Minister, said Mr Ocalan, of the Kurdistan People's Party (PKK), would be kept under police surveillance and could not leave Italy. A decision over what to do with Mr Ocalan could wait only a few days longer.

Last month, the guerrilla leader was ordered to remain in the Rome area after arriving in Italy from Moscow on an Aeroflot flight with the apparent help of Italian politicians from the hardline Communist Refoundation party.

The restrictions were based on an international arrest warrant that was issued by Germany, which initially sought his extradition for terrorist charges. However, the Rome court ruled yesterday that the restrictions were void after Germany dispatched a watershed international arrest warrant that does not envisage extradition. The judges reserved a decision on a separate arrest warrant issued by

Turkish authorities. In Ankara, Ismet Sezgin, the Turkish Defence Minister, said that the court decision would damage relations between Turkey and Italy. "It is a regrettable decision from the point of view of relations and of international law," he said. "It will be evaluated and there will be an adequate response."

Mesut Yilmaz, the outgoing Turkish Prime Minister, said: "We will appeal to a higher court. He has been released without conditions."

Ismail Cem, the Turkish Foreign Minister, called a emergency meeting of his aides to discuss the affair.

Lamberto Dini, the Italian Foreign Minister, said that Mr Ocalan might still be tried for entering Italy with a false passport, or deported.

In Strasbourg, the Council of Europe ministers committee was expected to decide yesterday on an Italian request that the European Committee on Criminal Problems meet to find a solution to the Ocalan affair. Hundreds of Kurdish protesters gathered outside the Palace of Europe calling for an international peace conference to resolve the Kurdish question.



Ocalan: decision on trial or deportation within few days

# Serbs rallied for crusade

FROM TOM WALKER IN PEC

SIX Serb youths killed in a western Kosovo bar were buried yesterday as Belgrade tried to turn a day of tragedy in its southern province into a nationwide crusade against armed Albanian separatism.

About 4,000 Serbs gathered beneath the peaks of the Cursed mountains, which form the city of Pec's western backdrop, and listened to the Orthodox Patriarch Pavle deliver a watershed funeral oration in which he said both the Koran and the Old Testament blessed the taking of innocent lives to "crimes against the whole of humanity".

Schools throughout Kosovo were closed. The main evening television bulletin said "everything must be done to eradicate terrorism because children's lives are priceless".

International monitors with the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), whose vehicles had been stoned in Pec on Tuesday, stayed clear of the funeral. William Walker, the

OSCE's ambassador, and Richard Holbrooke, the US envoy, have been heavily criticised in international media for their reactions to the killings, most Serbs concluding that they made no distinction between the deaths of Kosovo Liberation Army guerrillas and innocent civilians.

Faddy'shdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, who completed his latest tour of Kosovo yesterday, said that the killings could prove a watershed, marking a descent into an altogether fiercer ethnic struggle.

"If this is the beginning of the dirty war here, then this place will become Northern Ireland in three dimensions," Mr Faddy'shdown said. "It could get very nasty, very quickly."

It is still not clear whether the 10 masked gunmen who entered the Panda bar in a middle-class suburb of Pec late on Monday night were members of the KLA. Adem Demjaci, the organisation's spokesman, has made no official comment on the incident.

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# UN pullout sets stage for attack

### Britain orders aid workers to leave Iraq as conflict looms, James Bone and Michael Theodoulou write

UNITED Nations weapons inspectors quit Iraq and UN humanitarian workers gathered for safety at a UN office in Baghdad yesterday, after Britain and the United States issued private warnings to the UN Secretary-General of possible airstrikes.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock, Britain's UN Ambassador, used the occasion of a dinner party on Tuesday night to tell the guest of honour, Kofi Annan, the UN chief, that Britain was ordering all its nationals on UN duty to leave Iraq.

A spokesman said 142 UN relief workers, mostly employed in the "oil-for-food" programme, remained in government-controlled areas of Iraq and had sought refuge in the UN office at the Canal Hotel in Baghdad. Earlier, 66 UN workers left the country, along with all weapons inspectors.

Russia, Iraq's staunchest friend on the Security Council, called an emergency council meeting yesterday to try to head off military action. But British and US officials said it was difficult to see what Iraqi officials could do to avert the airstrikes, having failed to make good on the promises made last month to restore co-operation with the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM).

As he arrived for work yesterday, Richard Butler, the UNSCOM chairman, said Iraq had failed to make good on its promises of resumed co-operation, which persuaded Britain and the United States to call off military action at the last



American military personnel guiding an FA18 on the flight deck of the USS Enterprise aircraft carrier in preparations for possible airstrikes

moment on November 14. "I was given the job of testing that and reporting to the council on whether or not that co-operation had been given," he said. "I regret that I had to report the fact, which is that it had not been given and that we can't adequately do our job under these circumstances."

Mr Butler's ten-page report listed repeated incidents of obstruction since the arm inspectors returned to Iraq, and concluded that Baghdad had further curtailed the inspectors' work. Mr Butler divulged that he had cancelled the most intrusive of the planned inspections this month when it became clear that Iraq had taken "advance actions" to clear sites of incriminating material.

A team of inspectors was barred from the Baath Party headquarters in Baghdad, even though they had "solid evidence" of the presence there of proscribed materials.

When inspectors arrived to search the headquarters of the Special Security Organisation, suspected of shielding Iraq's remaining weapons of mass destruction, they found the office had been moved and documents inside transferred to an undisclosed location.

A visit by the same team to the management offices of the Military Industrialisation Corporation, which oversees Iraq's weapons programmes, observed that the site "had been prepared to avoid any disclosure of relevant materials".

Iraq also refused to grant the UN access to government

archives, or to provide documents, even though several of them had already been seen by inspectors. Iraqis yesterday seemed resigned to airstrikes. President Saddam Hussein urged his long-suffering people to "confront American and British aggression" after he chaired an emergency meeting of aides. "We call on you, Iraqis, women and men, after

relying on God, to throw out their dreams and their failed visions and prove by solid facts that they will fail as they have failed during the Mother of all Battles," said a statement referring to the 1991 Gulf War.

"They have been planning for a long time to commit a new aggression against you, motivated by their Zionist hatred, thinking, may God forbid, that they can achieve their goals that all the Arab nation should kneel under their feet," it added. Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister, said Mr Butler's report was "full of lies and a falsification of the truth" and had been "drawn up on purpose to justify a US and British military aggression". Iraq had fulfilled its November 14 promise to work with

the inspectors despite their "provocative actions".

The timing for any strikes could be complicated by Ramadan, the Muslim holy month that begins on Saturday or Sunday, leaving a rapidly closing window of opportunity should President Clinton decide on immediate action. Any attack on an Arab country after that point could inflame anti-American sentiment across the Muslim world.

Leading Arab states like Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia have in the past month said Iraq would be to blame for the consequences of its actions, but public opinion across much of the Arab world remains hostile to airstrikes.

ri-American sentiment across the Muslim world.

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Leading article, page 19

## West wary of 'Samson option'

THE one factor worrying Western strategists planning an attack on Iraq is President Saddam Hussein's "Samson option". Could the Iraqi leader, faced with a devastating onslaught, launch a counter-attack that could kill thousands with chemical or biological weapons?

Western officials are cautious, largely because no one knows for sure what stocks of chemical and biological weapons material Iraq still has. Officials yesterday admitted that Saddam might try to re-

### Michael Binyon on vengeance that could unleash chemical weapons

taliate if he felt cornered. In February the Foreign Office released a report on Iraq's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons which said that the country might still have operational Scud-tye missiles with chemical and biological warheads.

The obvious target for any revenge attack is Israel. Saddam would calculate that such

an attack would split the Arab coalition against him. Arab public opinion is hostile to American intervention in the region, and believes that the Benjamin Netanyahu Government is unwilling to move towards peace — a perception strengthened after this week's Clinton visit.

Iraqi Scuds hit Israel during the Gulf war. But Iraq is

unlikely to attack Saudi Arabia or the Gulf this time, in the hope that a war during Ramadan would so outrage religious sensibilities in these countries that their governments would find it hard to support any Western action.

Gerry Segal, of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said yesterday that the 1991 deterrent still held: Israel's warning that if it was attacked it would launch a "devastating" response — seen as a warning of nuclear retaliation.



United Nations arms inspectors leave their headquarters in Baghdad yesterday

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# Why a cup of tea is a life-saver



**Dr Thomas Stuttford reports on the benefits of drinking tea; daffodils and Alzheimer's disease; why mums-to-be need folic acid; the effect of nuts on heart disease; and MRI scans**

The bottles are gathering on the sideboard and under the Christmas tree but whatever the benefits of alcohol in moderation, the hardest drinking pair of families will need other liquid nourishment. Only Tintin's Captain Haddock rejects all drinks other than whisky. How lucky then that the evidence is accumulating about the considerable advantages of tea, mainly because of its antioxidant qualities.

Few of those who enjoy a glass of whisky before dinner doubt that it is good for their health. They will have heard from Scotland this week that a preprandial glass of well-matured malt whisky is rich in health-providing antioxidants, and so supplements the antioxidant polyphenols taken in wine with a meal.

Evidence, reported in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, from the Rowett Research Institute near Aberdeen, showed that the polyphenols from 12-year-old malts had a longer-lasting effect on the body's levels of antioxidants than did red wine.

The report compared mature malts with non-matured whisky and red wine. The amount of antioxidants in red wine is dependent on its age and where it was grown. Well-matured whisky is better than younger whisky, but re-

grettably elderly claret is not as good as a younger wine. Antioxidants, whether found in tea, malt whisky or red wine, protect the body from potentially harmful substances called free radicals. These occur throughout the environment and are naturally produced in the body where they can damage its cells. The antioxidants have been likened by tea manufacturers to fire extinguishers. They are available to quench any "fires" lit in our tissues by an excessive quantity of free radicals before the cells have been damaged. Taking antioxidants is a damage-limitation exercise that reduces the incidence of both heart disease and cancer.

The sources of antioxidants are myriad. Many vitamins, but in particular vitamin E and vitamin C, have powerful antioxidant roles, as do trace elements such as selenium, and of course dark green leafy vegetables and peppers, carrots, etc. Black and green tea contain, just as do red wine and old malt whisky, polyphenols — flavonoids — which offer protection against the ravages of the free radicals and interrupt the slow change reaction of damage which could lead to cardiovascular disease and malignancy.

When the ear-splitting noise of the Christmas jollity has become too much, and retreat to

the kitchen and a cup of tea offers the best hope of remaining companionable, the refuge from the party is only following a tradition started 5,000 years ago by the Chinese. Even then they wrote about its ability to diminish fatigue and improve flagging physical and mental performance.

Then, as now, a good cup of strong tea and the weariest grandparent will be fit to return to the fray. Chinese observations about changes in mood induced by tea are confirmed by more recent university research which showed that two thirds of people who drink a cup of tea had their mood elevated.

Black and green tea have similar medicinal qualities. As well as the health-giving advantages bestowed by the antioxidants, tea has also been shown to have a beneficial effect in lowering blood pressure and cholesterol levels. There is evidence that drinking more than five cups of tea a day reduces the incidence of both strokes and heart attacks, and the effect is particularly marked as far as strokes are concerned. In Japanese men over 40, a stroke was twice as likely in light tea drinkers as in heavy tea drinkers. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* recently carried a report of a clinical trial in Frank-



Flower power: daffodils contain a substance which may prove a godsend for pharmaceutical companies in the fight against Alzheimer's disease

## Hope blooms for Alzheimer's

SPRINGTIME visitors to the British headquarters of the pharmaceutical company Janssen-Cilag can admire the daffodils which brighten the beds either side of the main drive. These two varieties of daffodils are not common or garden bulbs such as delight the eyes of Herrick and Wordsworth, but have been carefully bred because they are rich in galantamine.

Galantamine is not yet a household name but it has properties that may help to lighten the load of 500,000 Britons who have Alzheimer's disease.

Researchers have discovered that galantamine has an inhibitory effect on cholinesterase activity. Cholinesterase is the enzyme that removes the acetylcholine which is in short supply in patients with Alzheimer's. If the acetylcholine level can be boosted by re-

moving the enzyme which destroys it, Alzheimer's disease might be kept at bay. The drugs Tacrine, Aricept and Exelon — already used in different parts of the world to improve memory in sufferers of Alzheimer's — work on this principle. Galantamine, also found in Caucasian snowdrops, is now being prepared by Shire Pharmaceuticals, an independent company allied to Janssen-Cilag. Galantamine has already completed its phase III trials, carried out in eight countries.

Patients were tested for skills such as memory, word-recall and recognition, orientation and comprehension of spoken language. As a result, doctors looking after them were able to form an overall picture of the patient's condition at the beginning of the trial and after they had been given galan-

tamine. Whereas those taking galantamine showed a marked improvement — measured on the scale as a score of +1.7 points — those who only had a placebo continued to deteriorate and, over the six-month period of the study, their score was reduced by 2.4 points. After a year, the intellect of those taking galantamine had remained a cognitive level similar to that which they had when they started — there had been no deterioration.

One of the exciting features of galantamine is that it is possible it exerts its influence on patients' memory, and hence on other aspects of their daily lives, not only as an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor, but also because it may have a nicotinic effect. It may well affect the nicotinic receptors in the brain to make them more sensitive to the nic-

otinic effect which has long been known to have a possible influence on memory and intellectual activity. Genetically lucky smokers are less likely to develop Alzheimer's; others may suffer arterial problems. On the other hand, the arteries of those who take the extract of daffodil bulbs will remain undamaged. If all goes well and galantamine is approved, it may be available in the new millennium.

Clinical studies of this sort are only possible because of earlier basic scientific work carried out in academic settings. In the past, comparatively little research has been done into Alzheimer's. There is now an opportunity for anyone to subscribe by sending a donation to Alzheimer's Research Trust, which can be contacted by phone on 0800 444 810.

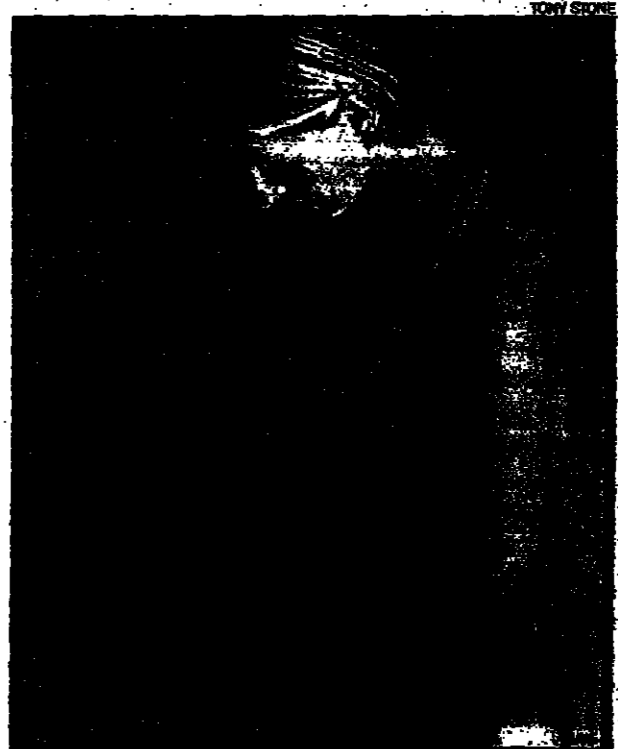
## Folic acid and health Lovers of nuts, take heart

THE campaign to persuade women to take regular folic acid when they are of child-bearing age, and there is a chance of conception, is proving a considerable success.

The message that many foetal abnormalities can be prevented by an adequate intake of folic acid before conception is now understood by an increasing proportion of women. To wait until pregnancy is confirmed is to wait too long as the foundations of the baby's brain and central nervous system are laid down early in its embryonic life.

Lambert's (Dalston) Ltd, the trading arm of the Family Planning Association, is to include a paragraph in the leaflets accompanying its contraceptives, advising women to take at least 400mcg of folic acid daily, as soon as they stop using the contraceptive inside the packet. A Health Education Authority spokesman commented on the paradox that it is a contraceptive manufacturer which is providing information on the means of obtaining a healthy baby. She said: "Providing folic acid information with contraceptives is making use of a good opportunity to inform women of child-bearing age about the steps they should take if they decide to stop using their contraceptive so as to conceive."

Folic acid is also important for those concerned about the state of their arteries. Too little



A regular intake of folic acid is essential for mums-to-be.

folic acid, and therefore too much homocysteine, is, like high cholesterol, smoking, lack of exercise and obesity, a risk factor for heart disease.

A new device for measuring homocysteine has been introduced by Drew Scientific, competing with one made by Shield. Both enable doctors to

check whether people have been eating enough food fortified with folic acid, such as breakfast cereals and bread, and particularly rich in folic acid, such as leafy green vegetables.

• Drew Scientific: 01229 82089 Shield Diagnostics: 01382 422000

FEW Christmas tables will be without their bowl of nuts. By the time the turkey and pudding have been eaten, many a bowl of nuts will have served no better purpose than to form part of the table decorations.

Dr Frank Hu and his colleagues from the Harvard School of Public Health would not approve of missing such an excellent opportunity to eat what is a valuable food source, which also has the advantage of being coronary-protective.

For more than a decade, research workers have been studying some 86,000 American women aged 34 to 59, who were persuaded to eat nuts more than five times a week. The results, of Dr Hu's research, reported in the *British Medical Journal*, showed that the nut-eating women, when compared with their nutless contemporaries, were about one-third less likely to suffer from coronary heart disease.

Dr Hu wondered if there might be other factors separating nut-eaters from non-nut-eaters but, even when taking into account all possible confounding factors — perhaps nut-eaters exercised more, were "greener" and had a more health-conscious diet — he still found that the fall in the women's death rate from heart disease was important.

The Harvard institute's theory is that the unsaturated fats in nuts help to reduce the serum cholesterol. Nuts may also contain other cardioprotective substances including vitamin E — a very potent antioxidant — and potassium, which is known to have an influence on the action of heart muscle. Dr Hu's conclusion is that all wise women should not just have the occasional nut in their Christmas fare, a chocolate bar or a Florentine, but that nuts should become part of the daily diet.

## Diagnosis at a glance

DESPITE General Pinocchio's bulk, he will have been slid into an MRI scanner at the London Clinic in order to get an image of his spinal cord.

The MRI machine is one of the great advances in medicine of the past 20 years. It is now possible to see the structure inside the spine or the joints so that the nature of its derangement is not a matter of speculation but can be scrutinised.

Frequently in the past, clinicians discovered, either in the operating theatre or the post-mortem room, that their confidence in their own opinions was greater than their diagnostic ability.

The MRI scanner is like a shiny white cigar holder. The patient, like a cigar, is eased into it. The general, doubtless used to gunfire, will not have been disturbed by the noise as he lay starting at the featureless white casing inches from his nose. The more refined the machine, the greater the noise, which sounds as if a machine-

gun is being fired against it at point-blank range.

So wonderful are the images of torn knee cartilage or protruded discs pressing on the spinal cord that it was inevitable that such a useful tool would soon be used to investigate the other bodily systems. The British Heart Foundation has recently issued a fact file for doctors outlining the use of MRI scans for the cardiovascular system.

To obtain pictures of the heart beating, important advances in technology, including scanner speed and ultra-fast computers for image processing were necessary. These advances have been achieved and it is now possible for the MRI scanner to behave much like an echocardiogram but with much better three-dimensional display of the heart.

The MRI allows accurate assessment of the volume of the heart's chambers to measure how well it is working. It can measure the thickness of

the heart walls and can assess the damage done after a heart attack. It will show up any tumours in the heart and give a good idea as to whether they are benign or malignant.

The machine can also be used for assessing the valves and, of course, for imaging the whole of the aorta, the artery leading from the heart.

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# Tell me on a Sunday, Agent X

Anthony Howard on the twilight world of spooks and hacks

**T**he relationship between journalism and the Secret Intelligence Service has always been a grey one. By one of those strange ironies of the British political system, it was probably most closely consummated in the offices of the left-wing New Statesman...

if I had been there, I should have reached much the same deal or bargain with a fellow, albeit differently employed, worker in the field (if only for reasons of self-protection)...

## Hacks really should not try to serve two masters

It would certainly have come as a surprise to Robert Bruce Lockhart who maintained a buoyant career as a Beaverbrook journalist between the wars...

The proper argument is not about total segregation but about where the line should be drawn in the interests of neither side compromising the other...

But not all such decisions are easy ones. I remember hearing once that virtually every journalist covering the Vietnam War had some kind of intelligence connection...



# It's made them go blind

Obsession with sex has led the Republicans to miss political realities

**W**ill they ever learn? They were once an irresistible vote-winning machine, a permanent ideological ascendancy. But success went to their heads...

how much more disgusted will they be when the Chief Justice of the United States is forced to use the same pornographic language by the Republican chairman of the House...

Anatole Kaletsky

This brings me to the most self-destructive consequence of the Republicans' actions. This is the impact of the market crash or an abrupt economic slowdown...

# Out of their league

The FA is too inept to make illicit gains, says Kevin McCarron

**A**ny charge of corruption levelled against the Football Association in its present crisis, would amount to a compliment. At least such an accusation has glamorous undertones...

The FA may be spared animosity only because the spectacle it presents is too ridiculous to sustain hatred. Mispaced self-regard extends to the national team. England, with a gifted squad, reached only the second round of the World Cup...

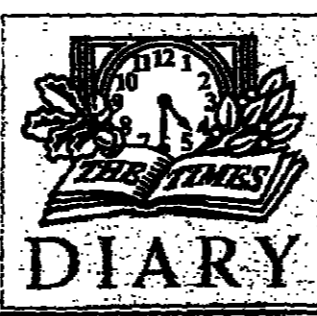
# Car trouble

**L**ORD BROCKET, the "Ferrari fraudster", is writing a history of the marque, in which he promises to expose the rusty undercarriage of the murky trade...



Seed's Gladstonian missions. One man: 'Sir, why are you consorting with low company?' Sure! you know about Catholic priests...

He started writing this book on the inside, and tells me he has found a publisher... a friend confides: 'He wants to make clear that the Ferrari business is not as squeaky clean as some might think...'...



Warwick University. he will now join Professor Peter Davison, an emeritus professor and editor of Orwell's diaries. 'They got tangled in a dreadful politeness trap...' I hear, Dons at Birkbeck College, which set a record low on University Challenge, blame staff: 'It was a temp very embarrassing.'

**Dim dons**  
**I**nteresting chap, George Orwell, but is this overkill? London University is granting him two memorial lectures this year after inviting the wrong academic to deliver the talk. Too polite to disinvite one Dr Peter Davidson, specialist in 17th-century poetry at...

**Holy problem**  
**P**ope Joan lived, according to a senior Roman Catholic author,

Peter Stanford, a former Catholic Herald Editor, claims to have discovered the first evidence for the existence of the female pontiff, who supposedly reigned as Joan VIII, dressed as a chap...

chair used to test the gender of post-Joan Pops - an attendant would reach through the hole and confirm the personal arrangements of the new pontiff.

**Fair op**  
**T**HOSE fearful of the knife might be encouraged by the next batch of medals, as depicted in a new calendar sent for my examination...



"Come in - I won't shake hands, my palms are greasy!"

**MICK JAGGER** has been snubbed. Michael Eavis, the Somerset farmer who invites the Glastonbury Festival on local, has invited Sir Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan and REM to the end-of-city festival. But as for the tax-cadre Rolling Stones, the Labour candidate says: 'There's no room.'



leaving the sponsor, a nightclub, short: Diary Towers may step in.

**RICHARD GOTT**, who resigned from The Guardian after The Spectator, edited by Lawson, linked him with the KGB, is circumspect about the allegations. 'There was a time when I would have stuck pins in him, but now I don't bother. I remember that Peter Preston (the paper's Editor) wrote pointedly at the time that 'we all know where these murky allegations come from'.

JASPER GERARD  
101353.344@compuserve.com



Forthcoming marriages

Mr A.D.N. Balne and Mrs A. Gibbs. The engagement is announced...

COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. December 16: Mr Graham Allen, MP (Vice-Chamberlain of the Household)...

BUCKINGHAM PALACE. December 16: The Princess Royal, President, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers...

The Queen received Admiral Nigel Essenhigh on his appointment as Commander-in-Chief Fleet.

The Queen held a Council at 12.30 pm. There were present the Right Honourable Lord Bessett...

The Princess Royal, President, The Princess Royal Trust for Carers, this afternoon attended a Luncheon at County Hall...

KENSINGTON PALACE. December 16: The Duke of Gloucester, Commissioner, English Heritage...

ST JAMES'S PALACE. December 16: The Duke of Kent, President, Imperial War Museum...

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ST JAMES'S PALACE. December 16: The Duke of Kent, President, Imperial War Museum...



Staff at the National Portrait Gallery putting up a new painting of the House of Lords in session which goes on show at the gallery today. The painting, which depicts 328 peers and bishops, will be on show until February 25.

Birthdays today

Mr Peter Blackburn, chairman, Nestlé UK, 58; Professor Mark Casson, economist, 53; Mr Charles Caspary, actor, 53; Mr David Collett, former chairman, National Centre for Volunteering, 66; Viscount Laverney, 77; Lord de Villiers, 87; Lord Glenamara, CH, 86; Mr Bernard Hill, actor, 54; Miss Gwendolen Kirchner, former matron, The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, 87; The Hon Dominic Lawson, Editor, The Sunday Telegraph, 42; Mr Tom Naylor, electronic engineer, 70; Mr Kerry Packer, chairman, Australian publishing and broadcasting companies, 61; Sir Leonard Peach, former chairman, Police Complaints Authority, 66; Mr Robert Robinson, broadcaster, 71; Mr D.A.G. Smith, former Headmaster, Bradford Grammar School, 64; Mr Tommy Steele, actor and singer, 62; Baroness Strathairn, 70; Mr Ray Wilson, former footballer, 64.

Parliamentary Carol Service

The Prime Minister was represented by the Secretary of State for the Home Department who read the sixth lesson at a parliamentary carol service held yesterday at St Margaret's Church, Westminster Abbey, in aid of the Westminster Medical School Research Trust. The Speaker read the seventh lesson.

Leverhulme Trust

Research Professors, chosen from 303 applicants and due to take up their posts on October 1, 1999, are: Jonathan Bate, Professor of English Literature, University of Liverpool, 'The place of poetry and The Case of John Clare'; Richard Blundell, Professor of Economics, University College London, 'Semiparametric estimation and consumer demand'; Geoffrey Hosking, Professor of Russian History, School of Slavonic and East European Studies, The Russian people and the Soviet Union.

Marriage

Mr J.R. Maxwell-Macdonald and Miss E.K. Logie. The marriage took place on Saturday, December 12, at St Andrew's Church, Bilsbury, of Mr Jack Maxwell-Macdonald, elder son of Mr and Mrs John Maxwell-Macdonald, of Largs, Argyll, to Miss Emma Logie, eldest daughter of Mr and Mrs James Logie, of Glasgow, Glasgow, and Mrs Janet Gilbey, of Wandsworth, London. The Rev Francis Bruce officiated, assisted by the Rev Graham Martin.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Prince Rupert, Royalist commander in the 'Civil War', died 1619; Sir Humphrey Davy, inventor of the miners' safety lamp, 1778; Jules de Goncourt, diarist, Paris, 1830; Ford Madox Ford, novelist and critic, 1893; W.L. Mackenzie King, Prime Minister of Canada, 1894-1980; 1925-30 and 1935-48; Berlin, Ontario, 1874. DEATHS: Simon Bolivar, Liberator of South America, Santa Marta, Colombia, 1830; William Thomson, 1st Baron Kelvin, physicist, 1824-1907; Harold Holt, Prime Minister of Australia 1966-67, drowned off Portsea, Victoria, 1967.

Royal engagements

The Prince of Wales will undertake engagements in Cardiff. The Princess Royal will open the first phase of the Oxfordshire Museum project and visit an exhibition to mark the bicentenary of the Oxfordshire Yeomanry at Oxfordshire Museum, Park Street, Woodstock, at 10.15 and as patron, Home Farm Trust, will attend The Coming of Christmas at the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, at 7.50.

Receptions

NSCA. The Prince of Wales was the principal guest at a reception held on December 10 at the Banqueting House, Whitehall, to mark the centenary of the National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection. Sir Crispin Tickell, president of the society, presided, among 300 members and guests were: Lord Nathan, Mr Steven Norris and Mr John Spens, vice-presidents; Mr Michael Meacher (Minister for Environment), Mrs Gillian Shepherd, MP, and Lady Howe.

Arthur (Bob) Mason

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Arthur (Bob) Mason will be held in the Church of the Holy Trinity, Savoy, Savoy Hill, London, on Thursday, January 21, 1999, at 2.30pm.

British Society Council

Sir Neville Purvis, Director General of the British Society Council, presided at a reception held yesterday at Armourers' Hall for the council's Diploma in Safety Management and Diploma in Environmental Management.

Dinners

Greater London Licensure Members of the Greater London Licensure gave a dinner last night at the Royal Automobile Club, Park Mall, in honour of Field Marshal Lord Bramall, KG, and Lady Bramall and to mark Lord Bramall's retirement as Lord-Lieutenant of St John Church, Vice Lord-Lieutenant, presided.

Appointments

Mr Richard Muir to be Ambassador to Kuwait from March in succession to Mr Graham Boyce who is moving to a new Diplomatic Service appointment. Miss Kaye Oliver to be High Commissioner to Lesotho from February in succession to Mr Peter Smith who is moving to a new Diplomatic Service appointment.

Legal appointment

Lord Slynn of Hadley has been appointed President of the Bar Association for Commerce, Finance and Industry from January, in succession to Sir Stephen Brown.

Latest wills

Michael David Allan Field, of Bishop Monkton, Harrogate, North Yorkshire, left £3,965,985 net. Marion Patricia Brown, of Hasocks, West Sussex, left estate valued at £2,114,919 net. George Herbert Edridge, of Fairfield, Bury, Lancashire, left estate valued at £2,141,141 net.

University news

Leicester. Dr Thomas McKillop, Chief Executive Officer of Zeneca Pharmaceuticals and Chief Executive Designer of Zeneca Group, has been elected Pro-Chancellor of Leicester University.

NSCA. The Prince of Wales was the principal guest at a reception held on December 10 at the Banqueting House, Whitehall, to mark the centenary of the National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection.

ALLEN - William (Bill) CBE, I.D. F.R.S., died suddenly on December 14th 1998 in Weylwyn Garden City.

DEWY - On 15th December 1998 at Charing Cross Hospital, London, after a long illness, died peacefully at home in Jersey after a long illness, leaving a devoted wife, Dorothy, and local family.

HARRIS - Major G.M. (Tim) M.C. On 15th December 1998 peacefully at home in Jersey after a long illness, leaving a devoted wife, Dorothy, and local family.

ROBERTSON - Frederick William, aged 92, died peacefully on Monday 14th December 1998 at home in London.

MILTON - David John, Colonel late Royal Signals, died peacefully on 13th December 1998 at home in London.

TRADE: 0171 481 9822 FAX: 0171 481 9313 SOUTHAMPTON - Squadron Leader Arthur, Charles Southworth, on December 15th 1998, aged 53 years.

BMDS: 0171 680 6880 PRIVATE: 0171 481 4000

PERSONAL COLUMN

Advertisements for personal notices, including obituaries and birth announcements, organized by date of death.



NEWS

Allies on full alert for airstrikes

American and British forces were on full alert last night to begin immediate airstrikes on Iraq...

MI6 editor 'named' by MP

A Labour MP used parliamentary privilege to name Dominic Lawson, Editor of the Sunday Telegraph...

Advertising dome

The idea was simple: think of ten awe-inspiring examples of human achievement to advertise the Millennium Dome...

Hague blow

William Hague's public image has suffered, rather than improved, after his sacking of Viscount Cranborne...

Dinosaur find

The remains of a previously unknown species of aggressive flesh-eating dinosaur have been discovered in Provence...

Clinton vote

In a surreal convergence of crises, President Clinton huddled with top advisers to plan a military response to Iraq's latest rebuff...

Flats collapse

Up to 40 people are feared dead after a five-storey block of flats collapsed in a Rome inner-city district before dawn yesterday...

The name of university success

Students with old-fashioned names such as Doris or Norman do better in their examinations than those with more 'attractive' names...



Ffion Hague with Santa Claus at the Christmas party for children of MPs and staff of the House of Commons yesterday.

BUSINESS

FLOTATION: KPMG, the accounting firm, hinted that it could be ready for a flotation of its management business...

BUG ALERT: The millennium bug will hit many companies sooner than they think as computers with built-in 12 months budgeting and ordering systems could corrupt or crash...

HIGH NOON: Indian food producer Gulan Noon, based in Southall, West London is set to make £50 million on the sale of his business to WT Foods...

MARKETS: The FTSE 100 index was up 73.3 points at 5630.4. The pound was .75 of a cent down at \$1.6760 but up a tenth of a penny at DM2.7937.

EUROPEAN CUP: Manchester United have been given a glamorous but difficult tie against Internazionale in the quarter-finals of the European Cup...

FOOTBALL: David Shepphards, the former chairman of the Football League, has emerged as a front-runner to take over from Graham Kelly as chief executive of the Football Association...

RUGBY UNION: The Rugby Football Union has been summoned to appear before a committee of the International Rugby Board in Dublin today...

JOHN BRYANT: In the past seven days it is not the sportsmen but their leaders who have been looking sadly off the pace...

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES EDUCATION: Is this the end for Christmas hymns and traditional carols in schools? MEDIA: The diary of Britain's literary publicist...

RADIO & TV

Preview: Saddam Hussein beware, the Americans are coming Science at War (BBC2, 9.25pm) Review: Joe Joseph on a question of colour...

OPINION

With no warning To back away now would be a victory for extremism - Iraqi extremism. Saddam has deliberately forced this grim conclusion...

Modest manifesto

The man behind the dome may seem an unlikely disciple of Le Corbusier. But for Peter Mandelson it does seem as though less is more...

ANATOLE KATLETSKY

Impeachment would do limited damage to Mr Clinton's prospects of serving out his term at the White House, but would virtually guarantee catastrophic defeat for the Republicans...

ANTHONY HOWARD

Like journalists, intelligence officers are involved with the collection of information - and it is this shared purpose that makes it impossible for there not to be some crossover between the two callings...

KEVIN MCCARRA

Any charge of corruption levelled against the Football Association, in its present crisis, would amount to a compliment. At least such an accusation has glamorous underpinnings of candour and devious intelligence...



THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,977

A crossword puzzle grid with numbers indicating starting points for words.

Crossword clues and solutions for puzzle No. 20,976. Clues include 'Piece of lab equipment in match-box (4-4)', 'Frankfurter in toast may use it (6)', etc.

World City Weather section providing temperature forecasts for various cities including London, Paris, New York, and Sydney.

'Fowl weather.' advertisement featuring a bottle of Fowl weather ale and a cat.

Weather forecast for the UK, including a map of the British Isles and a table of regional conditions.

Weather forecast for various international cities, including New York, London, Paris, and Sydney.

INSIDE SECTION 2 TODAY



CREDIT RISK Software strives to reduce effects of market turmoil PAGE 27



ARTS Ian McKellen gives his all for pleasant laughter PAGES 31-33



SPORT John Woodcock fears for English cricket PAGES 38-44

TELEVISION AND RADIO Pages 42, 43

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

THURSDAY DECEMBER 17 1998

Cruickshank warns of '1999 millennium bug'

By MANUS COSTELLO THE first indication of the horrors of the millennium bug will become apparent early in the new year as systems making transactions 12 months ahead will fail to recognise 2000 and issue erroneous information or crash computers.

2000, the government body advising on the bug. The change to the first of January 1999 will create quite a blip in the number of computer problems, said Mr Cruickshank, speaking at a "year-to-go" review of the campaign to raise awareness of the bug.

The survey by Action 2000, which interviewed more than 3,000 businesses, showed that more than half the companies that employed between ten and 249 staff have yet to tackle the bug properly, and 76 per cent of companies employing fewer than ten people are not doing enough.

Businesses provide the substance of the supply chain for the big boys. Their vulnerability is increasingly being recognised, and larger companies are seeking assistance to suppliers not as altruistic but as defensive.

KPMG in \$3bn float for consulting business

By ROBERT LEA THE consultancy wing of KPMG, the international accountancy firm, is set for a multibillion dollar flotation possibly as early as the spring.

Mike Rake, the senior partner of KPMG in the UK, confirmed yesterday that the firm is looking seriously at floating off 20 per cent of its worldwide consulting division in a stock-market listing in New York.

Mr Rake said the rationale for a float was not to raise finance but to invest in other parts of the business. Its purpose would be, through the availability of share options, to give us the ability to recruit and retain the sort of people we need and give them an interest in the capital appreciation of that business, he said.

KPMG revenues from around the world in management consultancy for 1998 are expected to come in at about \$3 billion. The firm, however, refuses to publish the practice's earnings figures.

KPMG employs more than 1,600 professional staff in its consulting division in the UK, of which 133 are partners. UK consultancy partners make up 15 per cent of the total 850 partners involved in consulting worldwide.

The firm's executive is still studying the implications of the move, not least the management headache of integrating its separate consulting businesses around the world as well as dealing with the tax implications for a business currently owned by a partnership.

Mr Rake said the firm would be making a further announcement in the spring or early summer. He said the business would be listed in New York where the flotation of a professional services firm would be better received.

The news came as KPMG in the UK reported profits across the whole firm of £54.8 million for the year to September 30, a rise of 51 per cent. Fee income was up 19 per cent at £866.7 million, fired by a 50 per cent rise in revenues in consulting that accounts for a quarter of the UK firm's billings.



On a plate: Gulam Noon, who will continue to run the Noon food business after the sale

Noon sells out to WT for £50m

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

GULAM NOON, the Indian entrepreneur, is poised to make £50 million from the sale of his business, based in Southall, West London, supplying chilled and frozen Indian dishes to Sainsbury's and Waitrose supermarkets.

Mr Noon, who was born in Rajasthan in northern India and emigrated to the UK in the early Seventies, is selling the business he founded a decade ago to WT Foods.

He will join WT Foods as a non-executive director and will, with his brother, Akbar Shirazi and daughter, Zeenat Harnal, continue to run the Noon food business. His restaurant at Heathrow is not included in the deal and will continue to be run by another of his daughters.

WT acquisition, page 25

New economic landscape plan

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY AND ROLAND WATSON

PETER MANDELSON, the Trade and Industry Secretary, yesterday set out plans to push Britain in a new economic direction in the face of low-cost worldwide competition.

With the launch of a White Paper on competitiveness, he said Britain could not compete with countries that have low-cost raw materials and labour. He said Britain must export its knowledge and technology and move to be "ever more sophisticated" and anticipate markets.

His drive to alter the map of industry is backed by funds to help entrepreneurs and small business. The Department of Trade and Industry will set up a £150 million enterprise fund with business to encourage venture capital to back new business and increase its spending

on innovation by 20 per cent. The Government is also looking at tax breaks for research and development by small companies and changing insolvency laws to help struggling and failed businesses.

Mr Mandelson said the White Paper was designed to create the conditions for a "step change" to prepare the country for the new economic landscape of high-tech firms. It was broadly welcomed by the Confederation of British Industry.

John Redwood, Shadow Trade Secretary, said there was "nothing new, nothing of substance" in the proposals. He said they did nothing to help manufacturing industry.

Leading article, page 19 Mandelson's vision, page 27

Employment at record but claimant count rises

By JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

EMPLOYMENT in Britain has risen to record levels, suggesting that the labour market remains more robust than recent high-profile redundancy announcements have suggested.

The Office for National Statistics reported yesterday that, according to the Labour Force Survey, employment rose to 27.2 million in the three months to October, a gain of 80,000 on the previous three months and 259,000 up on last year.

Another sign of relative strength in Britain's jobs market was that vacancies notified in jobcentres remain historically high.

The ONS said that employment growth in the past three months largely reflected women coming into the labour market and, perhaps surprisingly, into full-time rather than part-time jobs. Most of the new jobs have been in service industries.

Despite rising employment over the past quarter, however, the claimant count of unemployment rose by 5,900 to 1.53 million in November on top of an upwardly revised 10,700 jump in October. This suggests that, in more recent weeks, the labour market has started to weaken as the economy has slowed.

The International Labour Organisation measure of unemployment, which includes those not eligible for benefit, rose by 16,000 in the three months to October to 1.8 million.

The weakest sector for jobs is manufacturing, where employment over the past three months has fallen by 1 per cent on the same period a year ago and by 1.5 per cent over the past six months compared with a year ago.

Andrew Smith, the Employment Minister, said that overall, yesterday's figures confounded the "doom and gloom merchants".

The minister said: "The small rise in the claimant count is confirmation of the slowdown people are expecting but there is underlying strength there. There is still significant jobs growth taking place."

Separate figures on the public finances were also published yesterday. Strong VAT receipts helped to ensure that public borrowing, measured by the public sector net cash requirement in November, was much less than the City had expected at £955 million.

This left the Government £4.3 billion in the black so far this fiscal year.

BUSINESS TODAY

Table with columns for FTSE 100, FTSE All Share, Nikkei, Dow Jones, S&P Composite, US RATE, Federal Funds, Long bond, Yield.

Table with columns for LONDON MONEY, 3-month interbank, Life long gilt, Future (Mar).

Table with columns for STERLING, New York, London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, £ Index.

Table with columns for DOLLAR, London, DM, FF, SF, Yen, \$ Index.

Table with columns for NORTH SEA OIL, Brent 15-day (Feb), GOLD.

\* denotes midday trading prices

Oil price lifts on Iraq fears

CRUDE OIL prices surged above \$11 per barrel late yesterday, as dealers braced themselves for US military strikes against Iraq, perhaps before the end of this week.

Brent North Sea crude prices on the International Petroleum Exchange rose to \$11.15 per barrel for January delivery from an opening price of \$10.75 and \$10.23 at Tuesday's close. The rise marked a big rebound in prices, which had been trading below \$10 for the past week.

The oil market has been swamped by oversupply, particularly as members of Opec persistently flout their own organisation's production ceilings.

The Irishman who knew too much

By SAIED SHAH

IT MAY sound like a bad joke. However, it emerged yesterday that an Irish builder's son ended up losing money after trying to cash in on a bit of insider information gleaned from his father.

To add insult to injury, his dad had to resign from the board of the family company.

the company, which he founded with his brother in 1979. In a statement to the Stock Exchange the company said that it had emerged that Mr Murtagh had "inadvertently" told two of his sons about the planned acquisition by Kingspan of Hewetson, a builder based in Yorkshire.

The first meeting between the two companies took place on October 28. Confirmation of the takeover at 200p a share valuing Hewetson at £57 million was announced yesterday.

Kingspan, contacted their brokers. On November 24, 20,000 shares in Hewetson were bought in the name of Nicky Shiers, the wife of Alan, one of Mr Murtagh's sons, at 137½p per share. The next day, 13,000 Hewetson shares were acquired by Kathryn McFadden, a close friend of Fergal, another of Mr Murtagh's sons, at 142p a share.

However, having finally hammered out an agreement with Hewetson on November 26, Mr Murtagh found out about his son's dealings and "advised" them to sell.

Ms McFadden sold her shareholding on November 30, at 130p per share, making a loss of £1,560.

Ms Shiers hung on a little longer, picking up a profit of £1,300 after selling on December 8 at £1.44 per share.

Eugene Murtagh, Brendan's brother and chief executive of Kingspan, yesterday said he was satisfied that his brother Brendan did not act dishonestly.

But it isn't all bad news for Brendan. Despite quitting the board, he is to remain at Kingspan, in charge of marketing. It also emerged that he holds 30,000 Hewetson shares bought at 116p. Yesterday they closed up 10p at 195p.

'Buy-to-Let' Mortgage advertisement with details on rates (6.49% APR), terms, and contact information for Mortgage Intelligence.

### Break puts rival on the menu

By DOMINIC WALSH

BREAK for the Border, the themed restaurant operator, said yesterday that it was in talks to acquire an unnamed privately owned rival.

Roger Beaumont, managing director, said: "Small companies like us are out of fashion, so we're talking to several parties with a view to creating critical mass." Talks with one operator, he said, were at "quite an advanced stage".

He said the move was a response to calls from some institutional investors for the group to lift its market capitalisation into the £50 million to £100 million range compared with its current market value of less than £12 million.

Mr Beaumont was speaking as the group reported a 28 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £440,000, with fully diluted earnings of 0.55p (0.44p). However, the shares fell 3p to 35p on the news that recently opened sites had suffered in the face of increased competition and the economic slowdown. As a result, operating profits from the core bars and restaurants division declined by 9.4 per cent to £99,000 from turnover up 14 per cent to £8.4 million.

"These units are performing to about 75 to 80 per cent of what we had budgeted them to do," Mr Beaumont explained. "It's the extra 20 per cent where you make your money. What we've got to do is build the business but it will take longer than we hoped."

Like-for-like sales in established units were up 8.6 per cent, although the last of its theatre interests, the Gaiety in Dublin, made a loss of £47,000. The company hopes to complete the sale of the theatre at above its £3.75 million book value "in the near future".

The interim dividend is unchanged at 0.7p.



Upper hand: Jim Stretton, left, Standard Life's chief executive, and Jim Spowart plan to undercut established lenders

## Standard Life to enter UK mortgage market

By RICHARD MILES, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

STANDARD LIFE, Europe's largest mutual insurer, announced yesterday that it would enter the UK mortgage market next month with a loan rate of 6.8 per cent, undercutting all the established mortgage lenders.

Outlining ambitions to take £1 billion of mortgage business within the first 12 months of operation, Standard Life Bank said it would also offer a 2 per cent discount for six months, reducing its variable rate loan to just 4.8 per cent.

Jim Spowart, the bank's managing director, said Standard Life could offer home loans with a profit mar-

gin of between 100 and 130 basis points without any detrimental effect to its return on capital, compared with a margin of between 200 and 300 basis points for a building society.

Mr Spowart, who revealed that the bank had employed nearly 200 additional staff to handle the expected flood of inquiries about the mortgage, claimed Standard Life could offer loans more cheaply because it had no "bricks and mortar" to maintain like conventional banks or building societies.

Standard Life Bank disclosed that it had attracted £1.8 billion from savers with its tele-

phone-based account since its launch 11 months ago. The banking operation is expected to move into profit in its third year. Egg, a rival direct banking operation established by Prudential, is expected to make losses of £200 million in its first three years.

Available from January 4, Standard Life's Freestyle mortgage plan does have a sting in the tail. Borrowers who redeem in the first year and move to a rival lender will suffer a penalty of three months' gross interest. There are no other redemption penalties or arrangement fees.

Freestyle is aimed primarily at second-time buyers and

homeowners who want to re-mortgage: the bank anticipates that 75 per cent of customers will be existing borrowers looking for a better rate. Standard Life will lend only up to 90 per cent of a property's value. The maximum loan on offer is £300,000.

Once customers have been accepted for a mortgage — a process that Standard Life claims will take no more than ten minutes — they are effectively underwritten for subsequent loans. The size of mortgage will not be based on multiples of income, but on an "affordability index".

Commentary, page 25

### Unions fear new checks on rights

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Government will today set out plans for a strong check on the implementation of union rights.

Unions have been told that the Government will give tough powers to the central arbitration committee, which will be the watchdog on recognition. The committee is to be able to adjudicate in recognition cases where the employer feels it would be harmful to sustainable good relations and also in cases where the majority of union members do not want recognition of a union.

Peter Mandelson, the Trade and Industry Secretary, is also to have powers to issue guidelines to the committee.

Unions are concerned that the committee's powers will be too great and that Mr Mandelson will also be able to interfere in industrial relations and effectively politicise them. They believe the committee will wrap the Fairness at Work legislation in red tape.

Although the unions successfully lobbied off government plans to make union members serve a qualifying period, the move on the arbitration committee nevertheless marks a shift towards employers' wishes and could present obstructions to the implementation of recognition.

Ian McCartney, industry Minister, yesterday set out the Government's intentions to the TUC before union leaders met Tony Blair last night. Details of the Government's plans for the Fairness at Work Bill — which will be published next month — are expected to be set out in a parliamentary written answer today.

### Stock market chiefs in London talks

THE heads of eight European stock exchanges are to meet in London tomorrow for private talks aimed at creating a pan-European stock exchange. The London gathering follows a European stock exchange meeting of exchange chiefs in Paris on November 27, which set up an Exchange Alliance Committee to begin work on creating a single market for about 300 leading European stocks. Tomorrow's meeting will be attended by Gavin Casey, the London Stock Exchange chief, Werner Seiert, the Deutsche Börse head, Jean-François Theodore, who runs the Paris-Bourse, and the heads of the exchanges in Amsterdam, Brussels, Madrid, Milan and Zurich. Sources said the group would concentrate on the same areas that it discussed in Paris — regulation, technology, indices, market rules, settlement and clearing and common structure, but more precise detail of the agenda was not clear. There is not expected to be a formal statement after the meeting.

### Phonelink sales up

PHONELINK, the online information services company, lifted sales to £9.9 million from £1.9 million in the six months to September 30, after completing two acquisitions in July. However, losses were unchanged at £1.7 million and the loss per share was 3p (3.6p), with no interim dividend offered. Sir Gordon Brunton, chairman, expressed confidence about the long-term outlook, saying the company's underlying business generated a positive cashflow from the end of November. The shares fell 5p to 32½p.

### Feedback distorted

FEEDBACK, makers of electronic equipment, blamed the strength of sterling and the Far East economic crisis for an interim loss. The company reported a pre-tax loss of £37,900 (£281,100 profit) for the six months to September 30. It said that the loss included £116,500 to cover reorganisation costs, which should yield annual savings of about £600,000. Turnover was down 30 per cent at £3.65 million. The loss per share was 4.82p (2.47p profit) and, again, there is no interim dividend.

### Rathbone buys Curzon

RATHBONE BROTHERS, the investment management and banking group, has bought Curzon Secretaries & Trustees, a trust and company management business based in St Helier, Jersey, for about £10.6 million. Rathbone said that the final purchase price would be dependent on Curzon's profits to April 8, 2000, but it said that the cost of the acquisition would not exceed £12 million. Curzon earned pre-tax profits of £1.1 million for the year to April 8.

### Alvis's £50m contracts

ALVIS, the UK defence group, has been awarded contracts by the Ministry of Defence with an aggregate value of more than £50 million. Alvis Vehicles is to supply 1,107 diesel conversion kits for the Army's CVR(T) armoured vehicle fleet and has agreed to convert 200 of these from petrol to diesel. A separate order for Alvis Unipower is for 53 rapid intervention vehicles for use at British air bases worldwide. The orders are the first to be received since the GKN Defence business was merged with Alvis in November.

### New Blue Circle chief

BLUE Circle Industries, the manufacturer of heavy building materials and heating and bathroom products, has appointed Richard Haythornthwaite as chief executive from July 15, next year, succeeding Keith Orrell-Jones. Mr Haythornthwaite, who started his career as a geologist for British Petroleum, is currently chief executive for Blue Circle's heavy building materials division in Asia and Europe. Mr Orrell-Jones was appointed chairman of Smith Industries from November 24.

### Forecast knocks Litho

SHARES of Litho Supplies fell 14½p to 115½p yesterday after the printing equipment company said that pre-tax profits in the second half are unlikely to match the first half. In September the company reported interim profits little changed at £4.2 million, against £4 million in the first half of the previous year. Yesterday the company said it expected difficult trading conditions to continue throughout the rest of the current financial year. Litho shares have fallen from 237½p a year ago.

### TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buy	Bank Sell
Australia \$	2.79	2.81
Austria S	20.88	19.02
Belgium F	60.85	55.99
Canada C	2.56	2.510
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8712	0.7997
Denmark Kr	11.23	10.34
Egypt £	5.91	5.30
Finland Fmk	9.05	8.30
France F	9.85	9.07
Germany D	2.961	2.713
Greece Dr	495	456
Hong Kong \$	13.61	12.51
India Rupee	129	109
Indonesia Rp	16404	11404
Ireland P	1.1976	1.0919
Israel Sh	7.33	6.67
Italy Lit	2045	1908
Japan Yen	209.31	191.78
Malta £	0.685	0.608
Netherlands Gld	3.243	2.948
New Zealand \$	3.36	3.11
Norway Kr	13.48	12.54
Portugal Esc	209.40	277.27
Spain Ptas	249.21	230.42
Sweden Kr	14.29	13.19
Switzerland Fr	2.410	2.192
Turkey Lira	527.26	498.43
USA \$	1.783	1.640

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

### Electronic ordering trial at Safeway

SAFeway, the supermarket group, has teamed up with IBM to run a trial of a new service that will allow customers to order their shopping from anywhere they like using handheld electronic organisers (Sarah Cunningham writes). Using the "Easi-order" organisers, developed by IBM, customers will be able to arrange a time at which they go to the branch to pick up their shopping. Safeway said the system will bridge the gap between its Shop & Go self-scanning system and its Collect & Go home-ordering service. In the longer term, the same

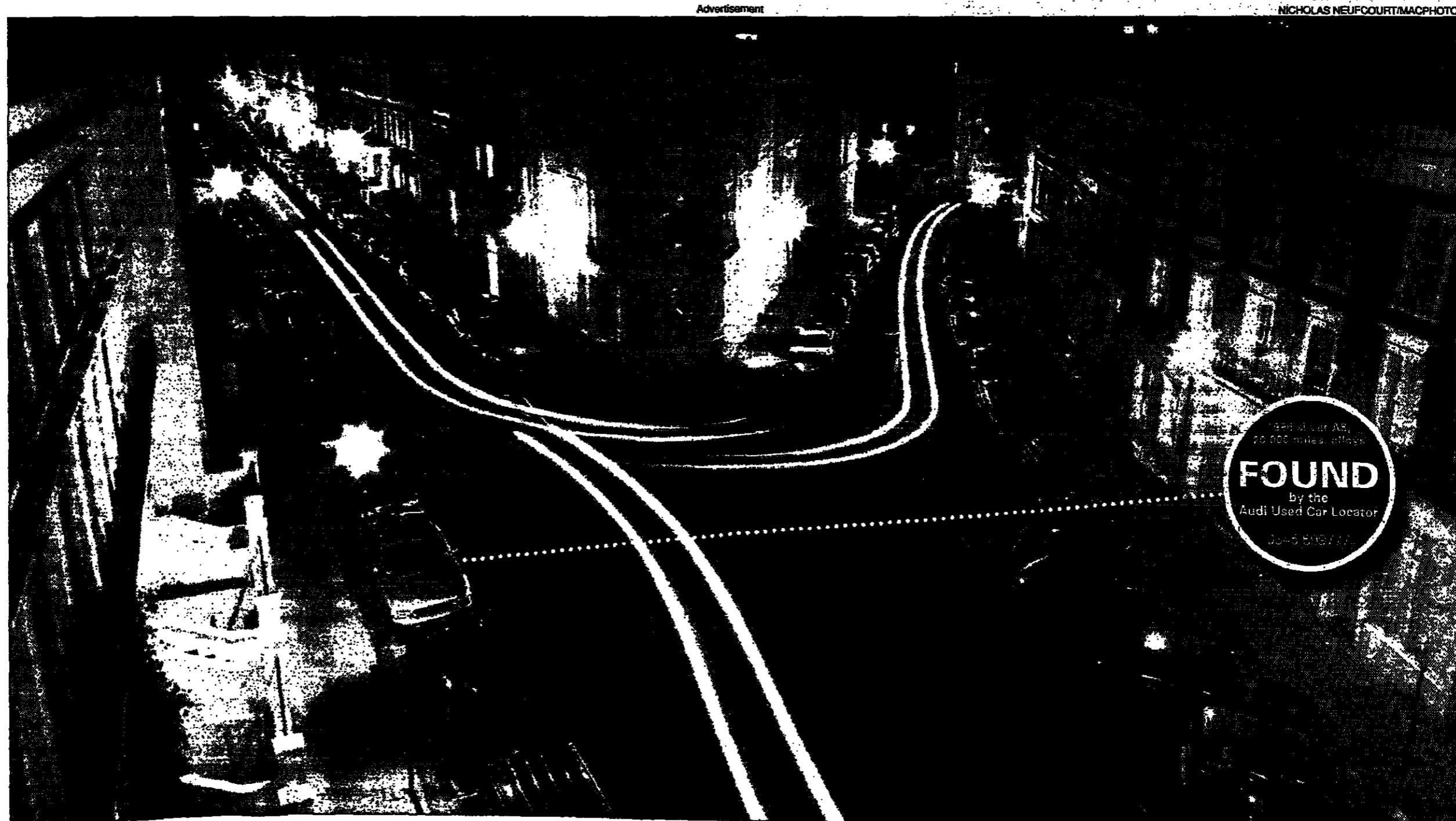
### City awaits FSA policy on discipline

CITY professionals will today learn how the Financial Services Authority (FSA) intends to enforce discipline in the markets, amid widespread unease about the broad scope of the new watchdog's powers (Richard Miles writes). Howard Davies, chairman of the FSA, will publish a consultative paper of 50-plus pages, detailing how the authority proposes to implement its enforcement policy. The financial community will be given up to three months to submit its views.

### Japan to lend \$5bn to Asean neighbours

JAPAN is to make \$5 billion (£3 billion) in tied loans available to assist South-East Asian countries through the current economic crisis (David Watts writes from Hanoi). The first loans were announced last night as Keizo Obuchi, the Prime Minister, arrived in Hanoi for the Association of South-East Asian Nations summit. The money is geared to help Japanese industry as much as domestic economies in the belief that a revived Japan is the best hope for pulling the nine-nation group out of its current economic problems. The first disbursements will be made to Malaysia and Thai-

NICHOLAS NEUFOURT/MACPHOTO



Night-time London traffic glides languidly through the sturdy latticework of Notting Hill's labyrinthine thoroughfares. How's that for a caption?

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by the Audi Used Car Locator  
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# Standard bombshell for lenders

From its Edinburgh eyrie, Standard Life lobbed a grenade into the middle of the mortgage market yesterday. And the carnage it created may fundamentally change the way we finance our house purchases.

Until a few years ago Standard was such a solid, may boring, institution that one could not imagine it making such a radical move. Yet to offer 6.8 per cent mortgages universally — nearly a percentage point less than those offered by rivals — and say that it can make money on margins of less than 1.3 per cent between its saving and borrowing rates (compared with at least 2 per cent for the traditional lenders) will make some of those traditional lenders wonder whether they can survive in an increasingly competitive market place.

Standard Life Bank is the elegant name the insurer has given to its banking subsidiary. This might not be as neat as Egg, the Pru's version of the same thing, but it amounts to the same. Both benefit from the fact that they are starting from scratch. They do not have a branch network or an army of middle managers shuffling papers. Both can use direct mail, call centres and newer technologies to their full. This keeps costs down and should allow fast response to customers' needs (though the scramble for Egg accounts after the launch cracked this image of competence).

In savings, both Standard and

Egg have capitalised on the worries many consumers have about the rates they are being offered by the high street banks, and in particular the recently converted former building societies. The likes of Halifax and Northern Rock angered investors when they put the needs of making profits for their new shareholders ahead of giving decent returns to their old ones.

Most of the big lenders have lost a market share in recent years and some, such as Abbey National, seem to think that fighting for market share in mortgages is not worth the bother.

And if traditional lenders did not agree with Abbey before Standard's move, they might not. The aggressive Scot says its target is to have a 4 per cent market share within a year. This is not 4 per cent of a growing market. Mortgage lending is expected to be static in real terms at best over the next three years, despite the likelihood of further interest rate cuts.

Standard is also exploiting two competitive advantages. One, which it shares with Nationwide and the few remaining building societies, is the ability to shoulder lower returns to build a busi-

ness because it does not have outside shareholders focused on short-term gains.

The second is that it has an AAA rating, something that Borelays and NatWest gave up a decade ago when they were writing off Third World debts. This means that Standard can borrow more cheaply from the money markets, and so lend more cheaply. Prudence has had its rewards.

## COMMENTARY by our City Editor



It is amusing over the past year to watch the outstanding ingenuity of the financial world. It would be hard to find a more interesting example of this than the way in which the market is full of groundswelling bids from international firms hoping that winning the audit will bring in large sums of money and management consultancy contracts.

Still, it will happen one day. It merely takes a brave firm of accountants and lawyers to question why these massive businesses, which give advice to the largest quoted companies in the world from the safe haven of new partnerships, should not have the stock market themselves. Of course there are the professional and professional bodies that might be against this. But almost every other area of business has benefited from deregulation over the past 15 or 20 years, so why not the accounting and legal professions? These sectors are crying out for reform.

The trial and error for biotech

Y

Fishing for excuses

# RJB jumps 6% on £1bn deal with PowerGen

By CARL MORTSHED

SHARES IN RJB Mining leapt yesterday as the colliery owner announced a £1 billion long-term coal contract with PowerGen, the electricity generator.

The 35 million tonne supply contract lasts until 2003 and will secure a home for more than a quarter of the company's annual output of some 26 million tonnes. News of the deal sent RJB shares rising 6 per cent to 71½p, as the market took the view that the coal miner had a viable future. RJB said that talks with National Power were still in progress, leaving the company with contracts in place to supply up to 81 million tonnes of coal for power generation by 2003.

The PowerGen deal follows a contract with Eastern Group, earlier in the month that agreed a £1.4 billion long-term coal supply contract.

The new contracts have been set at prices 30 per cent lower than previous deals with the generators. City analysts concluded that RJB may have secured its future but would make little money. "The margin will be extraordinarily thin," concluded one.

International coal prices have tumbled due to weak demand

from recession-hit Asia. PowerGen is paying a premium for its British coal but said yesterday: "It reduces our exposure to risks associated with buying on the international market, where supplies are less secure."

Richard Budge, chief executive, said that the negotiations proved the value of a secure and reliable supply of British coal to UK electricity generators. "This contract underpins the Government's objective of maintaining a diverse energy mix for power generation, and it is good news for job security."

RJB employs some 9,600 miners at 15 collieries and a

similar number of open-cast sites. However, the company admitted that the future was not entirely secure for certain Yorkshire pits.

Even assuming that a deal with National Power is concluded shortly, the deals with generators will not mop up all of RJB's estimated annual production of 26 million tonnes. Long-term contracts to PowerGen, Eastern and National Power should absorb some 20½ million tonnes and sales to industry and homes might take up 3 million tonnes, leaving RJB with a 2.3 million shortfall.

A spokesman said: "Nobody can carry on producing a product for which there is no buyer. We do need additional sales to secure markets for the output of some Yorkshire pits."

RJB was given a reprieve earlier this year when Peter Mandelson, the Secretary of State for Trade & Industry, extended a moratorium on the construction of gas-fired power plants. The decision ensured that coal would continue to provide a substantial part of the fuel for Britain's electricity generation.



Budge: 'good news for jobs'

Tempus page 26



Off the floor: Shena Harris, finance director, Lord Harris, centre and John Kitching, managing director of Carpetright

# Harris reveals pick-up in sales

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

LORD HARRIS of Peckham brought some cheer to shareholders of Carpetright yesterday when he reported a pick up in sales in recent weeks after a poor first half.

Reporting interim pre-tax profit to October 31 of £11.5 million, down from £10.1 million, Lord Harris, the chairman and chief executive, said like-for-like sales in the first half were down 3.7 per cent. Like-for-like sales did, however, gradually im-

prove from August onwards, he said, and were up 7.2 per cent in November, though December's sales have been flat.

He said that the market as a whole continues to struggle, with carpet sales remaining about 10 per cent down on the same period of last year. He said Carpetright was growing its share, which stands at 13 per cent of the carpets and floorings market.

Of the November upturn, he said: "People are not buying cars or furniture, they

are going back to small-ticket items and buying carpets." The average transaction at Carpetright is just £150, he said.

Interim earnings per share declined from 14.2p to 10.5p but the company is maintaining its interim dividend at 9.5p and said it expects to do the same for the final dividend. The shares, which have crashed from a 12-month high of 497 in October last night up 5p to 210.

Tempus page 26

# British Biotech abandons trial for cancer drug

By PAUL DURMAN

BRITISH BIOTECH, the drug development company criticised for overoptimism, has abandoned one of the trials of its cancer drug because it will not produce the results necessary to secure a marketing licence (see Commentary, this page).

The company said a trial of marimastat in ovarian cancer was being judged by criteria that were "not sufficiently objective" to form the basis of a submission to regulators. "The design of this study is insufficient for registration, whatever its outcome," said a spokesman.

British Biotech's new management team has already had to increase the size of three other marimastat trials to lower the efficacy hurdle — the amount of patient benefit it must demonstrate to claim success. Shares in British Biotech,

once the leader of the emerging pharmaceutical sector, fell by 15 per cent to 30½p, barely a penny above its all-time low. Martin Hall, the HSBC analyst and a consistent critic of the company, said: "It's not good news and raises questions about the other trials."

British Biotech is not expecting to stop or amend further trials of marimastat, having completed its review of the remaining ten phase III studies. Stopping the ovarian cancer trial, which had recruited 64 of a planned 300 patients, will save £750,000. The protocol allowed the drug's success to be judged by three separate measures, including CT scans and doctors' assessments. The other trials measure success by patient survival data, a much "harder" end point.

# Chirocaine receives approval

CHIROSCIENCE, the drug development company, has received its first regulatory approval for its long-lasting local anaesthetic but is having to rethink its marketing strategy after Zeneca's proposed merger with Astra (Paul Durman writes).

Chirocaine, safer and more widely usable than a closely related Astra anaesthetic, has been granted a licence in Sweden. Under a mutual recognition procedure, marketing approval for the rest of the European Union could follow in as little as four months.

Chirocaine was to have been sold by Zeneca, which acquired the rights earlier this year, and was expected to generate at least £200 million of revenue for Chiroscience.

But analysts now expect Zeneca to hand back the rights because of Chirocaine's overlap with Astra's anaesthetics.

Tempus page 26

# Trading in WT set to resume next month

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

SHARES IN WT Foods, suspended in October, should begin trading again next month after it finalises its deal to buy the privately owned Noon Group for up to £50 million.

WT Foods is funding the acquisition with the issue of 56.5 million new shares, which should raise £25.9 million. It is also borrowing £12.5 million. In all it is paying £25 million cash to Gulran Noon, the owner of the business, based in Southall. It will pay him a further £7.5 million in new shares, and a final £7.5 million in loan notes, if certain performance targets are met.

Mr Noon will own just under 8 per cent of the enlarged group, will be a non-executive director, and will continue to run the part of the business that he set up.

In 1997 Noon made pre-tax profit of £2.92 million on sales of £37.7 million. In the eight months to August 31 it made pre-tax profit of £1.74 million on sales of £23.27 million. WT Foods announced its interim results yesterday showing pre-tax profits in the six months to September 30 of £2.30 million (£1.64 million) on turnover of £22 million (£18 million). It is paying an interim dividend of 0.75p (0.5p).

Although the takeover of Noon is technically a reverse WT Foods, which owns a variety of ethnic food businesses including a pizza bread manufacturer, is maintaining management and control of the group.

Noon has long-standing contracts to supply Sainsbury's and Waitrose with chilled and frozen Indian ready meals.



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# Desmond takes £20m in Baltimore sale

By CHRIS AVRES



Two as one: Henry Boker, left, and Fran Rooney, Baltimore president

DERMOT DESMOND, the football financier and one of the Republic of Ireland's richest men, added an extra £20 million to his personal fortune yesterday following the sale of his software company, Baltimore Technology, to Britain's Zergo Holdings.

The move follows rumours that Mr Desmond, a director of Celtic, was interested in launching a bid for the Glasgow club. However, it is understood that he will hold on to an

18 per cent stake in the enlarged Zergo group.

Zergo, which develops software to encrypt information sent over the Internet, will pay an estimated £25 million for Baltimore in new shares, loan notes and debt. About 16 million worth of shares in the enlarged company, representing a 0 per cent stake, will be sold to Intel, the US microchip company. Shares in Zergo rose 0 per cent to 36½p yesterday.

Zergo also reported results

for the six months to October 31, which showed pre-tax losses of £3 million, compared to profits of £78,000 last year. Sales rose 44 per cent to £7.7 million.

Henry Boker, Zergo's chairman and chief executive, said: "Baltimore's market presence, core technology skills and the way in which the latter have been skillfully translated into a strong marketing and sales culture, will provide Zergo with a tremendous opportunity to increase shareholder value."

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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Barclays slips further down banks league table

ITS official, Barclays Bank has slipped to fifth place in the league table of Britain's biggest high street banks...



Alan Jones, left, chief executive and Ron Henderson, finance director, saw shares of BICC, the cables company, fall 5 1/2 p

was completed at £19.22. It was more than an hour later before the transaction was completed after inquiries by brokers.

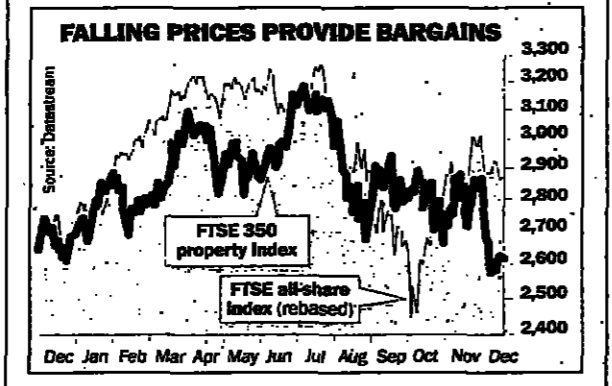
Barclays has been making much play of "customer primacy", or putting the customer first. That will be cold comfort to shareholders who may feel tempted to write a letter of complaint to the bank manager if the company continues to lose ground to its main rivals.

Share prices generally took their lead from the overnight strength of Wall Street and opening gains in Frankfurt. The FTSE 100 index closed 73.3 higher at 5,630.4 as 901 million shares changed hands.

morrow, the group flies to Edinburgh to talk to Scottish fund managers.

Renewed institutional buying hoisted Zeneca 4 1/2 p to £26.36. The company has been meeting selected institutions to convince them of the merits of the merger with Astra of Sweden, which has received a lukewarm reception in the City. Tomorrow, the group flies to Edinburgh to talk to Scottish fund managers.

TESCO rose 5 1/2 p to 172 1/4 p after BT Alex Brown, the broker, came out with a "strong buy" recommendation.



SAFETYWAY: The deal should be cash generative for the ambitious consortium which will invest less than 1 per cent of the network's yearly earnings at a net level.

Govett and Warburg Dillon Reed. Hopes that a bid may soon emerge lifted Rascal Electronics another 5 p to 33 1/2 p...

ICI touched \$36p before rallying to close 9p cheaper at 54 1/4 p after one broker moved to raise its recommendation for the shares from "reduce" to "hold" and set a target of 90p.

speculators were also in force at Wace Group with the price adding 4p to 38 1/2 p. There is talk the printer could soon be on the receiving end of an offer worth 50p a share which would value the group at £39 million.

NEWS: In the City, the German industrial giant, Volkswagen, has a bid for the British car manufacturer, Rover, which is being rejected by the board.

MAJOR INDICES

Table listing major stock indices including New York (Dow Jones, S&P Composite), Tokyo, Hong Kong, Amsterdam, Sydney, Frankfurt, Singapore, Brussels, Paris, Zurich, London (FTSE 100, FTSE 250, FTSE All-Share), and various international indices like Nikkei and Hang Seng.

RECENT ISSUES

Table listing recent financial issues such as AM VCT, Airbus, BPS Group, Charriot, and various other companies with their respective values and changes.

RP up (7)

Small table listing PPL Therapeutics and other financial metrics.

RISKS

Table listing various risk factors and their corresponding values, including Delta, Gamma, Vega, and others.

FALLS

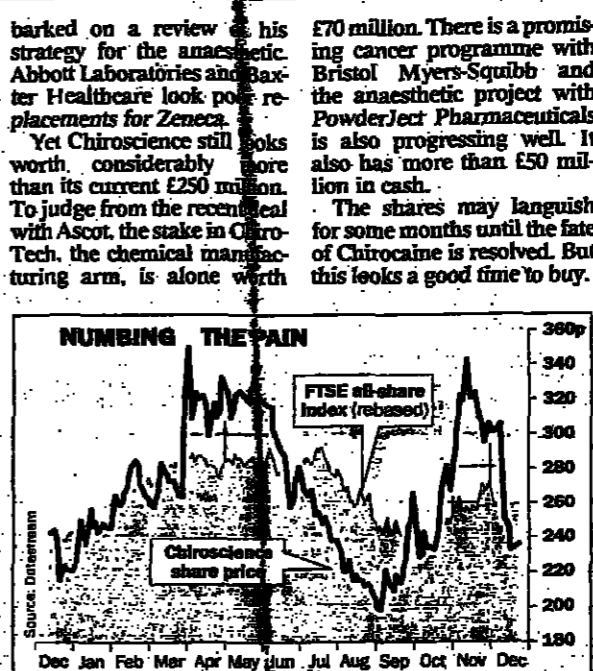
Table listing falls in various stock prices, including Delta, Gamma, Vega, and others.

Digging deep to survive

THE Government may have thrown RJB Mining a lifeline but it certainly fell short of handing it a lifeline. By bringing a halt to further gas-fired power stations, the Government ensured that Richard Power's collieries would have a job to do.

CHIROSCIENCE is awash with news from Sweden - good and bad. The good is that Chiroscience has secured approval to Chirocaine, the anaesthetic that is forecast to generate more than £200 million for the Cambridge company.

price at about 120p per gigajoule, a 20 per cent discount to the last deals with the generators, leaving RJB a very slim margin to its costs, estimated to be 114p per gigajoule.



Carpentright

CARPENTRIGHT must be given credit for reacting quickly to the downturn in trade that hit all carpet retailers this year.

CARPETRIGHT must be given credit for reacting quickly to the downturn in trade that hit all carpet retailers this year. It put the brakes on its expansion programme, re-opened costs and, after a mis-taken move away from discounting during the summer, cut its prices.

GO-AHEAD

GOING INTO EUROPE as a UK transport firm is a path trodden with trepidation after Stagecoach's experiences with Swedibus, but Go-Ahead appears to have done its homework well.

GOING INTO EUROPE as a UK transport firm is a path trodden with trepidation after Stagecoach's experiences with Swedibus, but Go-Ahead appears to have done its homework well. The first time a privatised UK company has taken on an overseas rail franchise, gives Go-Ahead an important foot in the door in what is a largely untapped market.

Table with columns for LIFFE, COMMODITIES, and LIFE OPTIONS, listing various market indices and their values.

Table with columns for LONDON FINANCIAL FUTURES, listing various financial instruments and their prices.

Table with columns for DOLLAR, listing exchange rates and other financial data.

Table with columns for MONEY RATES, listing interest rates and other financial metrics.

Table with columns for LIFE OPTIONS, listing various financial instruments and their values.

Table with columns for GOLD/PRECIOUS METALS, listing prices for gold, silver, and other metals.

Table with columns for STERLING SPOT AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE, listing exchange rates for various currencies.

Table with columns for BASKETBALL, CRICKET, and FOOTBALL, listing sports-related information.

A large advertisement for RFU (Rugby Football Union) featuring the text 'RFU potential case for defence' and other promotional content.

Who says politicians care about our money? According to the National Audit Office, Railtrack could have been sold to the public for over £15 billion more than it actually fetched in 1996, a loss of £60 for every working person in the country.

That sum is not arrived at just by hindsight, as so often in privatisations. It rests on the assumption that the Government held back 40 per cent of Railtrack shares so that taxpayers gained any uplift in the price as the company showed its paces. Previous sales, for instance of British Telecom, National Power and PowerGen, had shown the value of a staged sale. Taxpayers would have gained more if the State had kept 49 per cent.

Tony Blair told the Commons yesterday that the shortfall was another example of Tory incompetence. But in this case, incompetence had nothing to do with it. Sir John Bourn, the Comptroller and Auditor General, was both disingenuous and unduly kind in his report. Even such an independent official could not, perhaps, express

# Parties' rail tickets cost us each £60

the real truth. Our money was lost because it was politically convenient, both for John Major's Tory Government and for Mr Blair's Labour Opposition, to squander it.

To see why, you have to remember the political situation back in 1995-96. Labour was miles ahead in the polls. Reliable surveys of City fund managers regularly showed 90 per cent or more expecting Labour to form the next government. The election could come any time until May 1997.

Against this background, the Tories had embarked on a hugely complex project to break British Rail into dozens of functional and regional bits and to transfer them all into the private sector. Labour, represented first by John Prescott and then by Clare Short, was dead against it. So were voters. Rail privatisation was dubbed the poll tax on wheels. Like the stoic decision

to close many of London's hospitals, it was one of those politically suicidal exercises that characterised the Major Government.

Sir Brian Mawhinney, when Transport Secretary, was determined to make the process irreversible. Selling Railtrack was the key.

Apart from running the infrastructure, it was the main variable in the financial settlement. Its charges loom largest in the costs of train operators and in the higher subsidies needed to start private sector disciplines working.

In the original plan, Railtrack was not to be privatised until the end of the process, when ministers had a chance to see if the new system worked and investors could see the value of the biggest and most stable part of the new system. The timing might have been about now. Instead, it was brought forward. Sir George Young, Transport Secretary at the time of Railtrack's privatisation, was well aware that a phased sale was likely to raise more money for taxpayers. But so long as Government could exercise control of Railtrack, even via a minority interest, Labour could easily fulfil its oft-trumpeted pledge of a "publicly owned, publicly accountable railway".



GRAHAM BEARSE

So the Tories sacrificed our cash, along with our votes, to the cause. Mr Blair could easily have stopped it. As argued here at the time, it was a rare occasion when the Leader of the Opposition could take an executive decision of state.

For instance, if Labour had pledged an annual rail subsidy levy equal to Railtrack's distributable profits, or to its dividends. Railtrack shares would have been virtually worthless. No one would have bought them, except as a bet on a Tory election victory. The sale could not have gone ahead.

Perhaps Mr Blair was so keen to sound responsible that he did not want to do anything that sounded interventionist. Alternatively, Labour could have waved the sale through, ensuring a much higher price. But that was not politically convenient either.

A troublesome publicly owned

British Rail was probably the last thing that Mr Blair wanted. Even extra accountability has turned out to be a low priority. For new Labour, the Tory tactic was ideal. But Labour supporters still believed in its declared policy. So did Mr Prescott and Ms Short.

Labour verbally attacked and harried the sale, but stopped short of any action that could endanger it. There were dire warnings of reviews, a tough new regime, and eventual public control. But the main contractual arrangements were accepted, perhaps in the hope that they would not work and that many would fall in early. Clare Short, bereft of live ammunition, was left to huff and puff. Investors were warned off, on the grounds that Labour's intentions were much more radical than the City thought. Don't buy, was Labour's advice. The campaign was enough

to force the Tories to sell Railtrack at a low price because of the heavy and imminent political risk. They even threw in an unusual early dividend, payable before any likely election, to get the sale away.

Having warned investors off, Labour was then able to complain about the scandalously low price at which Railtrack was being sold. Labour was able to lambast the Tories for doing the dirty work and earn votes at the same time.

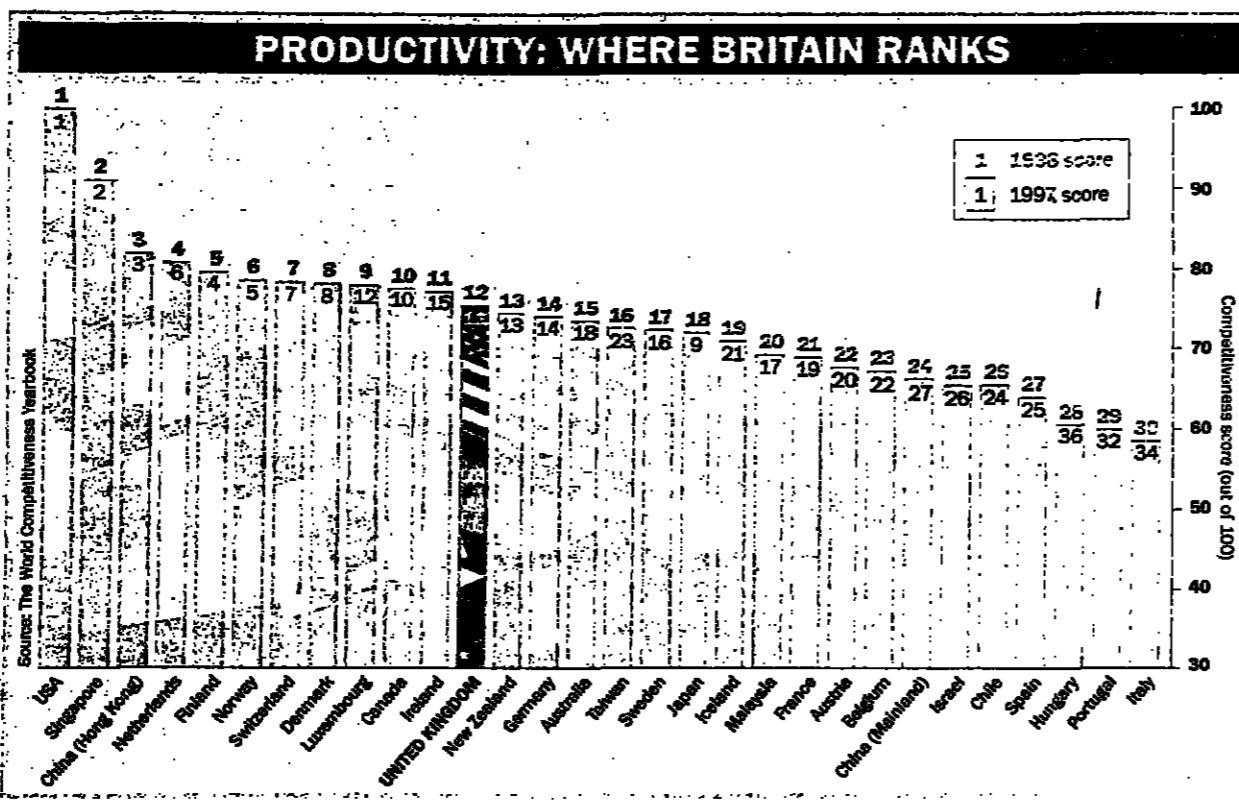
Again, Labour knew well enough that the price of this successful tactic would have to be paid by taxpayers. Under Labour, Railtrack looks forward to a profitable future because the Government needs to persuade it to invest in expanding its beloved collective transport system.

You cannot say the two parties conspired to rip off taxpayers. But they might as well have done. While a committee gravely ponders the rights and wrongs of a few million in party election funds, they would doubtless be happy to waste £1.5 billion of our money in the same cause next time.

# Innovation and creativity at the core of Mandelson's vision

**Christine Buckley** analyses the proposals in the Competitiveness White Paper

In today's industrial landscape, where manufacturing jobs are hemorrhaging and inward investors fleeing from planned key projects, it would be easy to see Peter Mandelson's vision of a knowledge-driven economy fuelled by a new enterprise culture as fanciful. His heart is in San Francisco, overlooking California's silicon clusters. But the UK's present reality is in the North East, where Mr Mandelson's constituency is and some families are facing second and third-generation unemployment because of the contraction of traditional industries.



ment, the global market is tough or that electronic commerce is the way forward.

Government is, after all, limited in what it can do to foster competitiveness by its own desire and by its resources. The Department of Trade and Industry is now a firm opponent of state intervention and has a small budget. The White Paper offers no new money to back its aims of promoting links between science and industry, between businesses and Government.

But while it may be true for the large and established businesses in the UK that they don't need such school-like encouragement and that they may only approach Government if they have sunk into extreme difficulties, it is not so for the millions of small companies and enterprises.

It is here that the most help and encouragement is needed and here that the cheerleading and links that the White Paper seeks to promote may have some use.

Small businesses make up 97 per cent of the UK's employers. They are responsible for the more innovative industrial developments - and, unlike their larger counterparts, are not as ready to cut and run to

another country when the going gets difficult. They are the companies that are more likely to be knowledge-driven, using expertise and intellectual advantage as opposed to labour and material.

Knowledge-driven is a term that should be used sparingly, of course. Ever since man crawled out of a cave and started shaping wood, development has been knowledge-driven. Some engineers sneer at Mr Mandelson's love of the phrase, fearing that the economy is shifting irrevocably towards the glitzier, high-tech world at the expense of the manufacturing base.

Y et the problem is that this shift is taking place already taking place and is largely a consequence of the global economy. Traditional manufacturing jobs need to be supported but they are less likely to be created and are less likely to deliver prosperity for the country when products can be made for a fraction of the price in developing nations.

Small and medium-sized businesses are targeted in one of the White Paper's key commitments - to create a £150 million enterprise fund - to

support their financing through venture capital. This is an effort not only to supply financing but to alter the culture of venture capitalists so that they do not shrink in fear at start-up proposals. Small businesses have the most growth potential but the venture capital industry has tended to shy away from what it perceives as adventurous risks, choosing instead the sounder ground of management buyouts of existing successful companies.

It is not a lot of money but it is a nod in the right direction. Start-ups will be further funded by the commitment to provide advice to 10,000 start-ups a year by 2001.

Those companies that have started and struggled or started and failed will have more leeway to rescue themselves through a review of insolvency law. This has been attacked by some as a bankrupt's charter but defended by the Government as removing the fear of failure. It is concerned that entrepreneurs should have the chance to prosper without the fear of punitive action if their businesses fail.

Stimulating venture capital and addressing insolvency is an attempt to stem the flow of ideas from the UK to overseas

where they are exploited. Britain has been adept at producing winning ideas and often floundered at exploiting them.

Tax incentives on research and development will be on offer to stimulate companies to direct more of their profits into fresh projects and innovation.

The Government is putting its efforts into promoting the use of the Internet and electronic commerce as a big driver of competitiveness. An "e-Envoy" is to be appointed to encourage participation in the digital age by promoting Internet use through the network of business links the Government intends to forge through universities, regional development agencies and enterprise schemes. Despite the ridiculous name, the e-Envoy is likely to find fertile ground among smaller businesses that quite simply do not have the time or resources to conduct much research into e-commerce. There will also be legislation to remove obstacles from e-commerce such as ratifying the legal validity of electronic documents and signatures.

Science links with business will be boosted by a £1.4 billion spending increase from the Government in partnership with the Wellcome Trust.

Earlier this week the DTI pumped £75 million into improving the science resources of universities. Innovation in business is to be encouraged by a 20 per cent increase in the DTI's spending over the next three years, taking it to £220 million.

The White Paper is a package of measures - in all there are 75 pledges - which is intended to overhaul the potential for Britain's industrialists and would-be industrialists to develop. While none of them is particularly radical, the sum of them could, over time - and it could take a long time - alter the industrial landscape into something that more approaches the US silicon valley that Mr Mandelson dreams of. His American vision may be far from the industrial North East and Midlands but in terms of competitiveness, it is not entirely misplaced. According to the World Competitiveness Year Book, the US stands the clear leader in most measures of competitiveness.

Checks will need to be exercised to ensure that the White Paper's measures do not fall into the inertia that has been the graveyard of other good intentions. Industry needs a genuine change of culture and purpose that will ensure the UK's prosperity long after Mr Mandelson has stopped delivering enthusiastic soundbites and gone on to another government post.

There will be a competitiveness council of business people and a competitiveness index to check words are being translated into action. Companies will also be pressed to take part in benchmarking, to make sure they are reaching international standards. This is especially important for those small and medium-sized companies who often don't realise they are falling short of international practice until the order books start to dry up.

The measures need to be advertised and applied with some vigour. If they are, the DTI could become more of a dynamic force than has been its fate in recent years and competitiveness could be improved. If they are, the changes to industry will be subtle but will have more strength than straightforward intervention could achieve.



Kevin Lomax of Misys, whose products aim to reduce exposure

# Fast software draws sting of risky markets

Relying on science to calculate risk can be almost as perilous as going on gut feeling. After all, the directors of Long Term Capital Management (LTCM) - two of whom had won a Nobel prize for their work on mathematics - had used highly sophisticated methods of calculating risk before the hedge fund ran into trouble and became the subject of a \$3.6 billion (£2.1 billion) rescue.

In spite of this, there seems to be a proliferation of software companies selling products that assess and manage risk. Perhaps the most audacious of all these companies is Misys, the London-listed software group under the chairmanship of Kevin Lomax, who recently enjoyed a short spell in the FTSE 100 index. The company hit the headlines this week by paying £36 million for C-ATS, a US rival.

Misys's clients are mainly large financial institutions, and its software packages can cost anything from a few hundred thousand pounds to several million pounds. The company, inevitably, claims that none of the institutions heavily stung by recent world market turmoil were using its products, and that they are now hammering on its door asking for more information.

According to Misys, there were two main problems with the way LTCM and other financial institutions calculated risk, leaving them sickeningly vulnerable to the Russian crisis. The first was based around how quickly the institutions accessed historical market information, and the second was that they failed to consider market risk alongside credit risk.

Misys, of course, claims its software can tackle these problems. The first is relatively simple, and involves boosting computing power within financial institutions so that historical data is updated throughout the day rather than every 24 hours. This means that sudden changes in markets automatically result in Misys's software re-evaluating risk. Given the software's ability to compare market changes to vast amounts of historical data, Misys argues, it can be a useful early-warning system.

Calculating credit risk is a slightly more complex matter. Firstly, Misys installs software in the settlements department of a large financial institution, which stores details of all the transactions that pass through it. The information is then sent to a "data warehouse". Misys's software then



THE ICE BOX

uses this data to establish which customers represent the greatest credit risk, based on how quickly they pay their bills, if they pay them at all.

The software uses this data to assess overall credit risk, and then compares it to wider market data. Misys claims that if this technique had been used by banks that invested in Russia, they would have lost a lot less money. This, of course, is unprovable. But at least one thing is certain: if more large banks decide to use Misys's software, they will have more than just their chief executive to blame if things go wrong.

□ HOLLYWOOD special effects companies are under threat from falling computer hardware prices, according to Forrester, the US market research group. The warning comes a day before Megaloo media, the British special

# Revolving door

CYRIL STEIN had his detractors during his time at Ladbroke, but there is no doubting the quality of the senior people he gathered around him at the leisure group, as exemplified by yesterday's appointment of Alan Bridle as chief operating officer of Millennium & Copthorne Hotels.

Bridle, like so many other top hotel company executives, spent much of his career with Ladbroke's Hilton International division, working under John Jarvis, who is now chairman and chief executive of Jarvis Hotels.

Former Hilton colleagues include Tony Potter (now chief executive of

Friendly Hotels), David Michels (Stakis chief executive) and Anthony Harris (deputy chief executive of Stakis). And his new boss at Millennium is none other than John Wilson, former chief operating officer at Hilton. The Ladbroke mafia also includes John Anderson, chief executive of Burford, and Keith Edelman, the Storehouse chief executive.

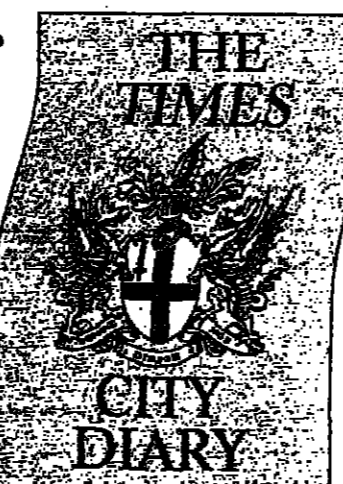
Michels, who worked at Ladbroke from 1982 until 1991, said: "The Ladbroke of that time was a pretty go-ahead company. But it had its faults, too. I guess that's why everybody left."

TENSIONS may rise and fall in the Gulf, but there are some things that do not change. In my mail, I find a list of fees from a firm of Iraqi lawyers touting for business and giving a price list broken down into US dollars. American weapons inspectors may not be that popular in Iraq at the moment, but it is good to see that, regardless of minor irritations such as wars and politics, the greenback remains as popular as ever.

**Bah, humbug**  
HAVE people got nothing better to do with their time in the run-up to the festive season? Yet another Christmas



Cyril Stein: quality controller



survey has ploughed through my letter box, this time from the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. This normally sensible organisation has seen fit to spend its money asking 251 of its members which of a series of statements "best expresses their professional attitude towards Christmas".

I can reveal that 26 per cent of those questioned settled on "I'm dreaming of a white Christmas", while 10 per cent went for "Bah, humbug".

Some 28 per cent went for the rather more sensible (if dreadfully dull) "Christmas is good for the economy as a whole because it boosts sales", while 14 per cent decided that "Christmas costs my business money because we lose productivity".

The response I would have given if CIMA had approached me is unsuitable for a family publication.

# Festive bonus

ONE person who will be enjoying a merry Christmas is Alan Bowkett, the never knowingly under-remunerated chief executive of Berisford. Bowkett enjoyed a hefty salary and stock options package throughout the engineering group's "turnaround" stage (when profits were rather thin on the ground). And he is still coming it, with his total package increasing by £119,000 to £566,000 in the year just ended. This included a performance-related bonus of some £210,000, which was no doubt well deserved, despite the fact that Berisford's taxable profits fell nearly 17 per cent.

# Time out

CALLERS to the Birmingham Midlands HQ earlier this week could have been forgiven for thinking that the building society had fallen victim to a hoax from a disgruntled investor. The building was closed "due to an emergency alarm".

More accurately, increasing numbers of staff had been complaining of dizzy spells and, as they began to pass out, the decision was prudently taken to evacuate the building.

While the emergency services grappled with what had caused the illness, 49 staff languished at the New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton.

Thankfully, all were discharged and the building has now reopened although, worryingly, the medical ex-

DOMINIC WALSH



pers have yet to come up with an explanation.

M'Y thanks go to Railtrack for a Christmas card showing children throwing snowballs at each other while a snowplough clears the adjoining railway. Under the usual fatuous greeting, the smallprint reads: "If you are lucky enough to enjoy a white Christmas this year, don't worry! Railtrack has a fleet of snowploughs on permanent standby during the busy winter period. A Christmas snowfall is always beautiful, but it can block routes, cause wheel-slip and reduce visibility. I don't know why, but somehow the card failed to instil the desired reassurance."

If perfection on the palate exists, this is it.

**Ardbeg**

ON BALANCE, THE FINEST MALT IN THE WORLD

# ACCOUNTANCY

## Time to close the GAAP

Allister Wilson says that principles suitable for continental companies must be applicable to UK firms

One of the most significant initiatives to be undertaken in the field of international accounting has been the IOSCO Agreement. In 1995 the International Accounting Standards Committee (IASC) reached an agreement with the International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) that, provided the IASC could complete a core set of upgraded standards to IOSCO's satisfaction, IOSCO would endorse IASC standards with a view to having them accepted as a sufficient body of accounting rules for multinational companies to use for the purposes of cross-border securities issues and listings. This week's IASC board meeting in Frankfurt will have seen the virtual completion of a long-awaited standard on the recognition and measurement of financial instruments, thus heralding the fulfilment of the IASC's side of the IOSCO bargain.

No doubt there will now ensue much speculation as to how good a job the IASC has done. Unfortunately, though, it is likely that a great deal of this will involve political jockeying rather than intellectual debate. Nevertheless, when it comes to a body of GAAP (generally accepted accounting practice) suitable for presenting fairly the economic substance of an entity's financial

performance and position, international accounting standards (IAS) can hold their ground against the best in the world.

This view is supported by the likes of Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, who, in its study on global investing, titled *Applies to Applies*, posed the question: "How close are IAS and US GAAP?" Its answer: "The answer depends on what benchmark you use: spelling out all the differences would require a textbook. FASB has identified 25 differences, although many investors would find most of them meaningless. For reflecting economic substance in most industries, IAS is easily of comparable quality to US GAAP, if auditors do their jobs. Yet as a rulebook, IAS is definitely less detailed than US GAAP."

There is nonetheless likely to be much heat but not much light generated in pondering on whether or not the US SEC will endorse the IASC package. For us in Europe, however, the issue is largely irrelevant. The SEC is unlikely to issue an unqualified endorsement of IAS. More importantly, though, circumstances are very different now to what they were three years ago.

Prior to the IOSCO agreement, there was always the danger that Europe's capital markets would fragment and thereby drive individual countries



Allister Wilson says we must get in step with the Continent

and companies into ad hoc alliances with the US and other international capital markets. However, circumstances have changed considerably. With EMU coming in a matter of days and alliances being formed between European stock exchanges, the capital markets in Europe will inevitably come much closer together and will, therefore, provide a significant counter-balance to the US capital markets. Inevitably, the world's largest companies will

be able to have more of their capital needs satisfied in Europe at the same cost of capital as the US. For some companies already tempted to go down the US GAAP route, this means holding their nerve a little longer until the full effects of a consolidated European capital market are felt.

In the meantime, individual European countries are taking a much more active role in the harmonisation movement. More to the point, though, it raises inter-

esting questions about the position of the UK Accounting Standards Board and UK GAAP generally. If the European capital markets accept financial reporting by European multinationals under the IASC umbrella, how much longer can the DTT insist that UK companies may report only under UK GAAP? Given that the London Stock Exchange has for many years accepted foreign companies reporting under IAS GAAP, it seems unsustainable that UK companies should continue to be compelled to prepare UK GAAP accounts.

It is an open secret that the ASB's influence at the board of the IASC is often significant. Recent IASC standards on goodwill, intangible assets, impairment and provisions look remarkably similar to the equivalent UK standards FRs 10, 11 and 12. At the same time, the ASB has signalled its intention to adopt into UK GAAP a new standard on pensions accounting to be based on the IAS equivalent. Thus there seems less of a case for the UK to continue in European financial reporting isolation. If IAS GAAP is considered suitable for the largest multinationals in Germany, France, Italy and elsewhere, surely it must be good enough for UK firms. While the UK Government may be reluctant to embrace the euro, there is no reason why we should not get in step with the rest of Europe on the matter of financial reporting.

Allister Wilson is a partner and director of international accounting in the UK firm of Ernst & Young

## Institute has to think the unthinkable

DOWN AT Moorgate Place they have consultants the way other buildings have mice. And the problem with consultants is that once you have a taste for hiring them you are lost. The headquarters of the English ICA is once again home to people being asked to think the unthinkable, throw everything up in the air and see what it looks like when it lands, people who probably say things like "let's put that in the lift and see what floor it stops at", or "filter it through the cappuccino machine and see if it comes out frothy".

The trouble is that the English ICA does need to properly think the unthinkable. All professions have been through a long period of self-doubt from within and attack from without. It is not obvious to the outside world what they are really there for. The public has been so assailed by people telling them that regulations and safeguards should be chucked away and a general free-for-all entered into that professions are stuck there looking guilty.

Professions are traditionally there to protect both the livelihoods of their members and the standards of work that the public requires of them. But the public has come to believe that they might get better standards of work or cheaper fees, if the professions didn't exist. So the accountability profession, and hence the main UK body, the English ICA, has to rework its rationale.

It does not look too good. It would be very easy to conjure up a scenario in which the whole profession fragments and vanishes elsewhere. The only thing left would be a couple of caretakers and a very fine Victorian pile in the heart of the City.

Certainly the institute's functions are very much diminished. The days when it was the premier organisation dealing with technical matters went when the independent Financial Reporting Council and its attendant Accounting Standards Board were set up and all the work on financial reporting rules vanished with them. Its regulatory function will similarly diminish assuming the Government's plans for an independent review board become reality and areas such as audit regulation, the senior end of the disciplinary process, and ethics depart from Moorgate Place. The institute's training and examining role could equally well diminish or vanish, though that is less likely.

But a scenario could be imagined where the large accounting firms decide to train

people themselves rather than outsourcing the function to the institute as they always have done. The firms could say that the cachet of qualifying at a large firm is bigger than the cachet of qualifying as a member of the profession.

They could point to the undoubted fact that the added value on one of their staff's CV is that they trained with Arthur Andersen or Ernst & Young, or whoever, rather than the fact that Moorgate Place organised the exams. The firms might easily find themselves arguing that it would make more economic sense to train people in-house in their own ethics, methods and skills than suffering the disruption and expense of having people go through the institute exams.

The downside to this idea is that it would be very hard to convince the Government that the legal safeguards of auditing under the Companies Act should be devolved in this way. And the firms, as they increasingly come under pressure because of their astonishing success, may find it much more convenient in any case in the future to have an institute that can act on their behalf. Arguments with the Government over liability, for example, are probably going to be better managed in the future through a third party in this way.

At the other end of the profession it is not beyond imagining that the smaller practitioners within the institute fold might not succumb to the offer of mass migration to another accounting body that would, like the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants, profess to be the natural home of the small practitioner. As a result the membership vanishes, leaving only those who are already semi-detached and working in business and industry. Without members a profession vanishes.

But will it happen? Certainly the perception of these changes will arrive faster than the changes themselves. But the split on the practising side where the large firms and the smaller practitioners are moving faster and faster apart will become particularly obvious and unbridgeable.

All of this is the darkest you can paint the situation. The shining bright side is that the accountancy profession is the most dynamic and successful profession of the last quarter century. The question is whether it can stay a coherent body, whether it splits into its constituent parts, and whether a professional body like the institute can manage that process.



ROBERT BRUCE

### No accounting for opinions

ALL the handbooks on management culture say the same thing — accountants tend to get on only with other accountants. And the same seems to be true in America, where the great Grant Thornton experiment has come to an untimely end.

Less than a year after he took over as chief chap at the firm, Adrian Smith has well stepped down. His background was, for an accounting firm, challenging. He was a

### ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Brit and had been worldwide head of marketing at Arthur Andersen. To choose him to head Grant Thornton was seen as a stroke of genius on the partners' part. Sadly it was after the annual partners' conference that, by "mutual agreement", they parted company.

Partners are muttering about how "interesting and innovative" his ideas had been, while others talk of a difference of opinion over "the speed of the

implementation of his ideas". Probably the wisest comment has been that partners were "keen on the idea — but not the reality". A bit like auditing.

#### Historic audit

WHEN you visit the offices of Saffery Champness, you see a map of the UK studded with coloured pegs. You know Safferys were pretty successful as firms in the lower half of the top 20 go, but you had no idea that they

had so many offices in far-flung places. But then it is pointed out that one of the firm's specialisms is looking after country and farming estates. The map is of clients rather than offices. So it comes as no surprise to find that the firm has launched a service called the "Historic Houses Health Check". Partners are not going to stin up the timbers looking for death-watch beetle. They offer "a fixed-price audit which gauges the financial and economic

health of historic houses and their related businesses".

#### Taxed to death

DEATH and taxes are said to be life's only certainties. Now, according to Deloitte & Touche, VATmen have taken a look at VAT on burials. And they have ruled that payments by a burial insurance fund to an undertaker are "one step removed" from burial services entitled to exemption. So VAT could be levied. They dig deep for their pound of flesh at Customs and Excise.

ROBERT BRUCE

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# Equities close near best of day

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High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg
100.00	98.50	Alcoholic Beverages	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Alcoholic Beverages	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Banks	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Banks	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Breweries, Pubs & Rest	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Breweries, Pubs & Rest	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Diversified Industrials	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Diversified Industrials	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Electricity	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Electricity	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Building Materials	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Building Materials	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Electronic & Elect	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Electronic & Elect	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Chemicals	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Chemicals	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Engineering	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Engineering	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Construction	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Construction	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Distributors	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Distributors	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Engineering Vehicles	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Engineering Vehicles	100.00	+1.5

High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg
100.00	98.50	Food Manufacturers	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Food Manufacturers	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Leisure & Hotels	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Leisure & Hotels	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Healthcare	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Healthcare	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Household Gds & Text	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Household Gds & Text	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Oil & Gas	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Oil & Gas	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Other Financial	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Other Financial	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Pharmaceuticals	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Pharmaceuticals	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Media	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Media	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Insurance	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Insurance	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Investment Trusts	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Investment Trusts	100.00	+1.5

High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg
100.00	98.50	Printing & Paper	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Printing & Paper	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Property	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Property	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Telecommunications	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Telecommunications	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Transport	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Transport	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Water	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Water	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Retailers, Food	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Retailers, Food	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Retailers, General	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Retailers, General	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Alternative Inv Market	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Alternative Inv Market	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Support Services	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Support Services	100.00	+1.5

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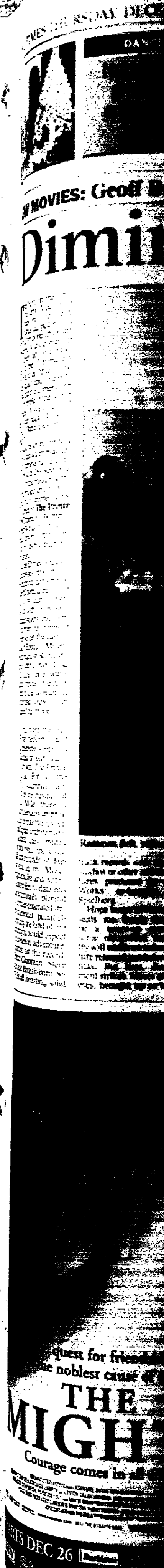
High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg	High	Low	Company	Price	% Chg
100.00	98.50	British Funds	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	British Funds	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Shorts (under 5 years)	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Shorts (under 5 years)	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Longs (over 15 years)	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Longs (over 15 years)	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Undated	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Undated	100.00	+1.5
100.00	98.50	Index-linked (at projected inflation of 5%)	100.00	+1.5	100.00	98.50	Index-linked (at projected inflation of 5%)	100.00	+1.5

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION

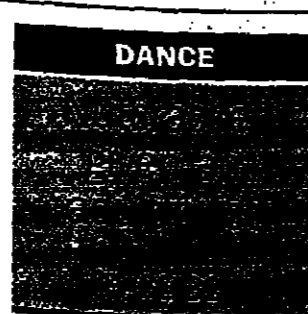
Main table containing unit trust prices, organized by fund name, share price, and percentage change. Includes various fund categories like Equity, Bond, and Money Market.

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# THE TIMES ARTS

THEATRE  
McKellen takes on the Master's voice  
PAGE 33



NEW MOVIES: Geoff Brown on the Book of Exodus stolidly retold in *The Prince of Egypt*, and other Christmas films

## Diminishing prophets

## Family fun thin on ground

The lights in the cinema dim. You settle back in your seat, hands clasped round the mandatory popcorn or the slurry drink. A title comes up on the screen, advising audiences that the film-makers have aimed to be "true to the essence, values and integrity of a story that is a cornerstone of faith for people of the world everywhere". A warning bell rings in your head. "Uh-oh," you muse. "Bang goes entertainment."

You would be wrong, up to a point. Who can watch plagues of locusts, burning bushes, pillars of fire and the Red Sea parting down the middle without feeling roused and happy? But the most immediately striking aspect of *The Prince of Egypt* (Empire, U, 99 mins), the DreamWorks company's animated version of the story of Moses, is its awful straining for seriousness.

For all the Disney studio's recent excursions into serious history and myth, cartoon features are still populated in the mind's eye by curvy mermaids, fish with eyebrows, wisecracking insects and teenagers fresh from the shopping mall. Here we get the cast of the Book of Exodus: Moses, Aaron, the pharaoh Ramses, Tipziorah, Jethro, even God himself, whose voice wafts magisterially through the cinema thanks to the wonder of Dolby surround sound. "Let my people go," he intones.

At this point the exit door beckons. But something keeps us rooted to our seats. Partly it is the way *The Prince of Egypt* looks. For all the film's bogus solemnity, unmatched since the heyday of Cecil B. De Mille, there is something undeniably impressive about the massive sweep of the Egyptian architecture, the accented whites, muted greys and browns, the thousands and thousands of Hebrew slaves led by Moses through desert, fire and water. No cartoon film to date has made such pictorially splendid use of computer-generated special effects that carry the kind of impact that you would expect from a live-action adventure. The directors, for the record, are Brenda Chapman, Steve Hickner and British-born Simon Wells, all boasting solid



Ramses (left, voiced by Ralph Fiennes) and Moses (Val Kilmer) chariot-race their youth away in *The Prince of Egypt*. All too soon, things turn solemn

track records with the Disney studios or other animation features, produced by DreamWorks' co-founder, Steven Spielberg.

Other voice artists come off better. Ralph Fiennes is easily identifiable as Ramses, and his peevish English tones suit the mouth of a character imprisoned by tradition. Sandra Bullock's Miriam, Moses's slave sister, brings welcome warmth to a film more concerned with impressing viewers than engaging them.

Moses himself, voiced by Val Kilmer, proves a likeable scallywag when romping with Ramses, only to turn pretty dull when he finds his life's mission. When Charlton Heston's voice rang out in De Mille's 1956 *Ten Commandments*, you felt that he could have led the Israelites to the moon, had he wanted. Kilmer's charisma, you sense, would barely take them over a pedestrian crossing.

Not that there is much room in the film for extra aural colouring. Hans Zimmer's score and the songs by Stephen Schwartz, composer of *Godspell*, crowd out the soundtrack with ethnic twangs, smatterings of Hebrew and massively overblown orchestrations. A good many people warble and wail, including the Israeli singer Ofra Haza, Boyz II Men, Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey.

Behind the rumpus, however, there is precious little substance, and the lyrics bypass Old Testament rigour for New Age waffle. Sample: "Who knows what miracles/You can achieve/When you believe/Somewhat you will/You will when you believe."

Life is tough being a parent with kids this Christmas. You want to take them to the cinema, but obstacles keep being put in your path. In theory a new film featuring Babe, the talking pig, should be just the ticket. But didn't the critics put *Babe: Pig in the City* through the mincer, and pronounce it too dark in tone for small fry? Maybe some boisterous cartoon is around, full of singing hippos and slapstick fun. Sorry. You have only got *The Prince of Egypt*, splendidly animated, but with little kiddie appeal.

But all is not lost. There is always *The Mask of Zorro* (PG). Those who like having their eyes pulverised by rapid-fire video games may find the film staid. But those of a quieter disposition, adults included, should relish the strong story, interesting characters and admirably integrated action. Refreshingly, this is a low-tech adventure: Antonio Banderas and Anthony Hopkins wield swords, not laser guns, as they stand up for justice in old California during the 19th century.

As the heroine, Catherine Zeta Jones more than earns her keep, flashing dark eyes, sparring with Banderas before falling, inevitably, in love. My only real quibble is over the length — 137 minutes, somewhat more than the material can stand.

Overlength — 129 minutes — is also a problem with *The Parent Trap* (PG), Disney's remake of its Hayley Mills vehicle of 1961 about twin sisters eager to bring their divorced parents together. But no other film in town allows ten-year-old girls to have a good laugh at their parents' expense, and fantasise about what it might be like to slip undetected into someone else's family.

soon after birth) comes from a grim council block. One lives in splendour among the vineyards of California's Napa Valley. The other resides in salubrious Kensington. If the actress playing the twins was a ghastly American horror, the film would be sunk; but ginger-haired Lindsay Lohan has enough natural bounce to make *The Parent Trap* seem fresher and more pleasant than it probably deserves.

There are no length problems with *T-Rex: Back to the Cretaceous* (U), a 40-minute epic shot in 3-D for the huge Imax screen. The dinosaurs, the main attraction, are never as frightening as the posters suggest: by accentuating depth at the expense of volume, 3-D photography makes them look like toys. The surrounding plot is feeble in the extreme, but then nobody will be lining up at the box office expecting *T-Rex*. The other animal attraction this season is, of course, *Babe: Pig in the City* (U). Sardonic teenagers might enjoy its black humour and Fellini-esque trappings; adults might fancy its technical dexterity. But there is only disappointment ahead for the bulk of the audience charmed by the original film.

Another misbegotten enterprise, *The Avengers* (U), pokes out at the National Film Theatre on scattered days. Better go tanked up with Christmas cheer; otherwise you might notice the charmless leads (Ralph Fiennes, Uma Thurman) and feeble script.

No insulation is necessary to enjoy the revival of the 1938 *Adventures of Robin Hood* (U), one of those rare Hollywood films that seem to vault over all shifts in fashion and connect with every audience. Errol Flynn was never more dashing. Technicolor never more glorious.

WAITING IS JUST WONDERFUL... LITTED, FUNNY AND UPLIFTING. \*\*\*\*\* Empire

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CHANGING TIMES

LISTINGS

Elgar's Third at the Hallé

ARTS

POP

Manic night at Wembley

RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Merril Hergie

LONDON

PETER PAN: Justin Slinger in the title role, with David Troughton as Captain Hook...

NOEL, NOEL: The violinist Monica Huggett leads her early music ensemble Sonnerie...

THE TEMPEST: David Calder is excellent in Adrian Noble's colourful production from Stratford...

SOUTH BANK SOULTY: In the Festival Hall tonight (7.30pm) the London Philharmonic continues the Rimsky-Korsakov Festival...

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: David Robertson leads the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra...

NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London

CHICAGO: Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of Kander and Ebb's musical about murder and folkie fame...

QUATRE MAINS: Astonishing dancer for hands created by Andrew Haines, creator of The Handmaid's Tale and Jock Macdonald...

DICK BARTON SPECIAL AGENT: Journey back to the 1950s with the famous old radio thriller, brought to life by Phil Witton...

GOLETS: David Ruxton Brown in a new musical by Sylvia Friedman and Cathy Shostak telling of the man-made monster who runs amok...

JESUS MY BOY: Tom Corral in John Dowd's witty and amusing comedy about Joseph's side of the story...

THE SNOWMAN: The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar



Mark Elder conducts the Hallé in Manchester

Symphonic Hall (0121-212 3333). Tonight, 7.30pm. (C)

MANCHESTER: Mark Elder packs up the baton to conduct the Hallé Orchestra in a performance of Elgar's unfinished Third Symphony...

SHEFFIELD: Jenie Dee prepares to wash the Mark Adams' hair in Deborah Page's staging of South Pacific, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical...

ELSEWHERE

BIRMINGHAM: David Robertson leads the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra...

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THE SNOWMAN: The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar



Christmas Eve revellers in Derek Deane's English National Ballet staging of The Nutcracker—a magical seasonal favourite or a slick and cynical exercise in marketing?

Seasonal sweet turned sour

There is no shortage of Christmas entertainment for dance lovers in London this month. Britain's three biggest dance companies are in town, and all are offering the traditional diet of festive, light-hearted ballets designed to bring a little cheer into our lives in the dark days of December...

DANCE

It is only when Clara first sets eyes on her Prince that something special begins to happen, and Deane can take credit for a Land of Snow that sparkles with bewitchment, opening a young girl's eyes to the glamorous make-believe world of perfect romance...

Godfather, who, it seems, can't keep his hungry eyes off her. Bearing gifts like sexual bribes, he virtually stalks Clara throughout Act I, his furtive overtures providing a creepy undercurrent that seems wholly superfluous and, indeed, totally misjudged...

DEBRA CRAINE

Wales and whinges

They have topped the album and singles charts this year, and been showered with awards and accolades, but Manic Street Preachers are not going to be placated by any of that old blarney...

POP

Manic Street Preachers Wembley Arena their performance of If You Tolerate This Your Children Will Be Next. Moments of levity were few, although Bradfield did slip in a comically adjusted verse...

Metal à la mode

Halloween. Walls had been draped with suitably scary shrouds, while the gothic stage set resembled a spooky silver cave. With a recently released, critically acclaimed third album called Powertrip to promote...

LISA VERRICO

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17 DEC 1998

THEATRE

McKellen triumphant

# One old master to another

**I**an McKellen spent the first production staged by the indie company that Jude Kelly has assembled at the West Yorkshire Playhouse; bumbling, interestingly but self-effacingly about in the background. He was Dorn in *The Seagull*, and for all the subtlety he was able to inject into the role, Dorn is not the richest character Chekhov created.

But with the actor and matinee idol Garry Essendine Sir Ian moves centre-stage, as he must. Not even Noël Coward, who wrote this juicy comic part for himself, ever portrayed a character who so unstopably insists on attention and is so successful at keeping the rest of the world dancing attendance.

Think of Peter Pan with a pencil moustache and an irritating smirk, or another of those weird Barrie child-people who get stuck in an emotional time-warps and you have McKellen's intelligent, enjoyable reading of the role. He can and does look adult and debonair in his svelte dressing-gowns and smart suits. He can make a splendid, sauntering entrance down the silver stairs at the back of Robert Innes Hopkins's art-deco set, and he always has a smooth, sophisticated put-down for those who irk him. But like many or most children he gets into scrapes he cannot handle and, also like many, he is alarmed by human beings' curious habit of getting older.

Fortunately, Garry has a sensible secretary-nanny in Susie Baxter's uptight Monica and an all-forgiving wife-mother in Clare Higgins's warm, comfy Liz. He picks up an adoring deb (Claudia Blakley), and is stalked both by a crazed would-be playwright (Rhashan Stone) and his manager's sexually predatory wife (Clare Swinburne). His fans get up

cramped, Feydeau-style, into the spare bedroom and/or the kitchen. But though Garry is supposed to be so much the spoilt narcissist that nobody knows when he's acting and when he isn't, McKellen is surely at his most authentic when he's smuggled asexually up to Liz on the sofa, or calling her in panic on the phone, or simply finding it impossible to be home alone.

Fear of ageing also brings out the honesty in him: the more so because the references to his being 40 have been cut, presumably because Sir Ian is 20 years older and, for all his gamine skipping, looks it. He winces in private horror at the discovery that the deb is a mere 21, freezes in disbelief when the playwright asks him his age, seems momentarily aghast when Swinburne's scotch finds it necessary to assure him he looks young. There are plenty of moments when McKellen proves himself a wittier, funnier actor than is sometimes supposed; but none more truthful than these.

One of two actors who excelled in *The Seagull* fall foul of the Curse of Companies, and seem miscast. There are also occasions when Malcolm Sutherland's production reaches too blatantly for laughter, stopping it in your throat. But you never forget for long that a leading actor is bringing energy, guile and skill to one of Coward's major comedies. And that makes the revival a worthy and entertaining celebration.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Philharmonia (whose teamwork throughout was admirable) achieved the frenetic, slightly desperate momentum that almost rounds off the work, not forgetting the sombre little diminuendo of the final bars.

That sense of giddy merry-making is also the hallmark of Smetana's *Bartered Bride*. Overture rarely has the bride been battered so rambunctiously. The exhilaration of the first movement is infectious; the orchestra's textures joining its appearances. The cellos tremolo fell on the ear as an extraordinarily realistic woodland susurration, and the audience buzz that followed this movement too seemed as much a response to its intensity as its familiarity.

The bracing dance rhythms of the Scherzo were crisply executed and there was exuberance in abundance in the finale, with off-beat horns in whooping pursuit of the strings. Towards the end of the symphony, Slatkin and the

CONCERTS

In the celebrated Largo, it was not so much the plangent cor anglais solo (evocatively played as it was by Jane Marshall) that impressed itself on the attention, as the inner life of the orchestral textures joining its appearances. The cellos tremolo fell on the ear as an extraordinarily realistic woodland susurration, and the audience buzz that followed this movement too seemed as much a response to its intensity as its familiarity.

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Noël Coward provides Ian McKellen, seen here with Claudia Blakley, with the chance to prove himself a funny actor

# ARTS

MUSIC

Gardiner's Bach project

## From Russia with love and an Irish accent

**Y**ear in, year out we are shown Chekhov's three sisters wistfully staring at the signpost to Moscow or the petals drifting down in the cherry orchard, and that's fine, but I wish more companies would choose to familiarise us with the characters in this remarkable play by Turgenev, all of them stricken by the disasters of love.

Natalya, bored out of her wits on her beloved husband's estate and obsessed by her son's merry young tutor, is a character so bemused by her feelings that we locate the source of the trouble ages before she does.

This is no criticism of the play, written around the time of the Crimean War, which manages to present a clearer and subtler understanding of the gusts of passion than any other work of its time. This sensibility marks it out as the first play in which we can fully recognise the characters as human beings like ourselves.

Yet the scheming Natalya, her betrayed ward Vera, Aleksey the dazzled tutor, and the rest of the bunch come before us perhaps once in a decade. We are the losers by this, and the RSC is doing its bit to alter matters by sending Michael Attenborough's new production out on tour from next March.

It should be said that the play is not precisely Turgenev. Brian Friel admits that he has created a "very free version" and, for all the Russian names, has placed it in a sort of Ireland. The various speech-rhythms, broad for a jumped-up serf like Lloyd Hutchinson's rascally doctor, refined almost out of existence in Natalya's pet cavalier Rakitin (a fine study of ruinously well-bred restraint from Sam Graham) — these work well as social indicators.

Attenborough also makes a particularly happy decision in casting Jack Tilton as a Scottish Aleksey, speaking in an accent that, as the advertisements tell us, always inspires trust. Awkward smiles and impulsive speech personify the

### A Month in the Country

Swan, Stratford

kind of good-natured youth whose energy upsets all the carefully arranged apple carts of polite society.

Catherine Walker's Vera chafes the savage descent from innocence to calculation in a way that shows us the agony undergone, but less persuasive is Sara Stewart's Natalya, chiefly because she allows us no indication of how she might have been before Aleksey.



Country cousins Sara Stewart and Sam Graham

sey burst into her heart. This is partly Friel's doing, making her into a Scarlett O'Hara — ie, a 20th-century heroine — but Stewart and Attenborough bring a touch of Snow White's Wicked Stepmother into the role as well.

Stewart relishes her lines — "I think we'll have lamb this evening," she decides, as if Vera herself is to be served up with the mint sauce — and the limitations imposed on her do not seriously weaken enjoyment of an engrossing play.

JEREMY KINGSTON

## New-way family favourites

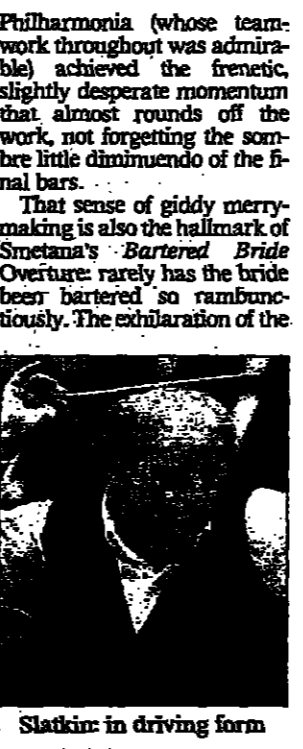
**C**zech Connections is the name given to Leonard Slatkin's "imaginative series", as it is described, somewhat optimistically, in the Philharmonia's publicity material. Whatever the commercial imperatives, the word "imaginative" is not the first to come to mind when considering a series dominated by Dvorak's Cello Concerto and Eighth and Ninth Symphonies, along with Smetana's *Ma Vlast* and overture to *The Bartered Bride*.

Be that as it may, if one is to ride old warhorses better than Slatkin to have in the saddle. It is quite an achievement to make the *New World* Symphony sound fresh and original, but Slatkin and the Philharmonia had worked hard to present interesting new facets. The indulgent lift in the first movement's striding rhythms was neatly contrived, while the bullet-like attack of the final bars elicited a gasp from the audience.

Philharmonia (whose teamwork throughout was admirable) achieved the frenetic, slightly desperate momentum that almost rounds off the work, not forgetting the sombre little diminuendo of the final bars.

That sense of giddy merry-making is also the hallmark of Smetana's *Bartered Bride*. Overture rarely has the bride been battered so rambunctiously. The exhilaration of the first movement is infectious; the orchestra's textures joining its appearances. The cellos tremolo fell on the ear as an extraordinarily realistic woodland susurration, and the audience buzz that followed this movement too seemed as much a response to its intensity as its familiarity.

The bracing dance rhythms of the Scherzo were crisply executed and there was exuberance in abundance in the finale, with off-beat horns in whooping pursuit of the strings. Towards the end of the symphony, Slatkin and the



Slatkin: in driving form

BARRY MILLINGTON

## Bach all the way

Monteverdi Choir  
St Giles

**B**ach 2000, they call it: John Eliot Gardiner's millennium project will see the Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists making a year-long pilgrimage through the churches, abbeys and cathedrals of Northern Europe, performing and recording all 200 of Bach's cantatas, and each one on the liturgical day for which it was written. They begin in Wetzlar on Christmas Day 1999, and end exactly a year later in Leipzig. And last weekend, St Giles' Cripplegate in the Barbican had a small preview of what was to come.

In the opening chorus of the autumn cantata *Wohl dem, der sich auf seinen Gott* the violins' opening measures were phrased very much in anticipation of the human voice. The converse of this means that there is often a tendency to "instrumentalise" the voices. For all one's admiration of the trumpet-like sopranos holding the chorale theme against the lightly-sprung inner parts, there are times when one longs for the Monteverdi Choir to sound just a little more like human flesh and blood in this repertoire.

Who could complain, though, when the theme of Christ's healing miracles in the Cantata BWV98 rang out with such firm confidence while maintaining the gentle, triple-beat lilt within its steady momentum? Or when cornetto and oboes hung their festive garlands round indefatigably buoyant vocal sequences in a cantata for the third day of Christmas? This, appropriately, is where we left Gardiner and his musicians — or rather, they left us. The Pied Piper effect has only just begun.

HILARY FINCH

★ Worth hearing

★★ Worth considering

★★★ Worth buying

## Very original Hockney

A DAY ON THE GRAND CANAL WITH THE EMPEROR OF CHINA  
Academy, E, 1998

**I**N THIS excellent 43-minute documentary, David Hockney guides us through the images on a 72ft-long Chinese scroll painting from the late 17th century. The scroll depicts the Xiangji Emperor's tour of his southern territories; Hockney reveals in its details of people's daily lives and opens our eyes and minds to matters of space, perspective, narrative and time. The director is Philip Haas, now a maker of intelligent if precious features such as *Angels & Insects*.

**GANG RELATED**  
*Film Four, 15, 1997*  
**S**O WHAT happens when two hardened detectives played by Jim Belushi and the late Tupac Shakur shoot a drug dealer, unaware that he's an undercover agent? They find someone to pin the crime on, a role nicely filled by Dennis Quaid's vagrant. The process is fascinating to watch; unfortunately, the story then drifts into more conventional territory. A rental release.

**JEREMIAH JOHNSTON**  
*Warner DVD, PG, 1972*  
**S**YDNEY POLLACK directs Robert Redford as a 19th-century mountain man who survives stark scenery, an enveloping beard and warring tribes. The script could be glued together better, but there is a wonderful sense of raw nature and its mysteries.

**PALMETTO**  
*Columbia TriStar, 15, 1998*  
**H**OPING to make a clean start after two years in jail, Woody Harrelson makes the mistake of returning home to Palmetto, Florida, with his former girlfriend, and accepting a fake kidnapping assignment from an undulating blonde. This is an elegant but barren exercise in the hard-boiled thriller genre. A rental release.

GEOFF BROWN

NEW ON VIDEO

especially in the crisp wide-screen images of this DVD edition. Special features include the original trailer and a "making of" documentary, though the biggest plum of all is the inclusion of a musical overture and entracte, never included in the film's TV transmissions.

**MIMIC**  
*Buena Vista, 15, 1998*  
**A**FTER developing an insect breed to kill New York's cockroaches, brilliant scientist Mira Sorvino finds her creations have become shape-shifting predators. These things happen in horror films, although we might have expected something more original from Guillermo del Toro, director of *Cronos*. But genre fans should lap up the atmosphere as Sorvino, Jeremy Northam and friends plot the city's salvation from the sub-way system's bowels. Available to rent, and close-captioned for the deaf.

## NEW CLASSICAL CDS: A Christmas delight, fast and furious Orpheus and emerald gems

BAROQUE

**PER LA NOTTE DI NATALE**  
Gritton/Collegium 90/Standard  
*Chandos Chaconne CHAN 064*  
★★★ £14.99  
**T**HIS delightful disc of Baroque music "for Christmas night" is one of the more original, and tasteful, seasonal offerings available this year. It consists of concertos by Vivaldi (RV270), Corelli (Op 6, No 8, concluding with the famous Pastorella) and Francesco Marzetti (Op 3, No 12), all intended for performance at Christmas, interspersed with appropriate cantatas by Alessandro Scarlatti (*Cantata pastorale*) and Telemann (*In Dulci Jubilo*).

Pastoral motifs abound, evoking the rustic instruments of the shepherds in the fields, though the intimate, cradlelike effect of muted strings and soporific pedal notes in the Vivaldi is a winner.

Collegium Musicum 90 plays with

style and subtlety under Simon Standage's direction. His chorus also acquires itself well in the Telemann, but it may have been unwise to allocate such substantial solo parts here to members of the chorus. Susan Gritton makes amends with a finely nuanced account of the soprano solo in the Scarlatti.

BARRY MILLINGTON

OPERA

**OFFENBACH**  
*Orphée aux enfers*  
Dessay/Gens/Petitbon/Beuron/Naouri/Pouchécourt/Lyons Opera Orch/Minkowski  
EMI 7243 5 56725 2 (two CDs) ★★ £23.99  
**T**HERE is no definitive version of Offenbach's *Orphée* any more than of Hoffmann's. EMI, in the first recording of the piece for many years, has opted for the 1858 original, but cannot resist putting in some of the hit numbers Offenbach added when reworking it later. Under Marc Minkowski the pace is fast and furious, a kind of Parisian palace of varieties where one turn follows hard on the heels of the last. Unless, of course, the company

joins hands to gallop off to heaven or down to hell.

Many of France's up and coming singers are there, with the delectable Natalie Dessay leading the way. Her mettlesome and quarrelsome Eurydice is a real flirt who pips out her songs with verve. The Fly Duet with Jupiter (Laurent Naouri) is a particular joy, and it is no surprise that she ends up a bacchant while Orpheus returns to earth. Yann Beuron as that musician has the best melody in the operetta — can-can apart, of course — but it goes to his violin. The rest of the cast is variable, with Jean-Paul Fouchécourt (Pluto) and Patricia Petitbon the best. The recording may carry too much spoken dialogue for some.

JOHN HIGGINS

VOCAL

**BID ADIEU**  
*Irish Songs*  
Murray/Johnson  
Forlane 16794 ★★ £14.99  
**O**UTSIDE the hard core of Irish traditional music-making, the "strange enchanting spell" of Erin, as George Moore had it, has invariably worked most potently on composers from far

across the water, responding primarily to Ireland's literary prowess.

So, in this enticing disc of Irish songs from Ann Murray and Graham Johnson we hear how the folk-song-collecting passion of Moore and George Thomson charmed Beethoven and Berlioz, and how the still undervalued skills of the Anglo-Irish E.J. Moeran were tuned to tales of *The Roving Dingle Boy* and *The Tinker's Daughter*.

It almost goes without saying that there can scarcely be anyone better equipped than Ann Murray, Dubliner and internationally hailed *Kammarängerin*, to handpick the real emerald gems of songs like Samuel Barber's classic James Joyce settings, including the haunting, word-wild waltz, *Novoletta*. And there are the lesser-known wonders of the Alexandria-born American composer Vittorio Rieti to sample too, with his fine settings of Yeats in *Two Songs between Two Waltzes*. Now who's for Heaney and Muldoon?

HILARY FINCH

★ Worth hearing

★★ Worth considering

★★★ Worth buying

SOU



John Eliot Gardiner presents

# BACH CANTATAS

MONTEVERDI CHOIR • ENGLISH BAROQUE SOLOISTS

Mon 21 Dec, 7.30pm  
Southwark Cathedral  
Cantatas 94, 121, 88

Sponsored by BT

# BOOKS

## Late news: Henry Bech wins Nobel Prize

John Updike's latest book finds the mischievous author striking back at his critics — and, thankfully, not acting his age

Last outing, Updike told his readers he was heading *Toward the End of Time*; we keep hearing he's winding up. In interviews he wonders idly if he has anything left to say; but then recognises that he may be "the literary Sarah Bernhard, going from one farewell to another. And if we can base any judgments about the author on his part-time not-quite-alter ego, Henry Bech, well — Bech's completely washed up. Bech, after all, has won the Nobel Prize — and what better indication could there be that a writer really, truly didn't have anything else to say?" Hang on, hold that thought. For Henry Bech wins the deadly laurel in *Bech and the Bounty of Sweden*, the last tale in a "quasi-novel" (its author's 48th book) which finds Updike yet again at his energetic and mischievous best, and it is hard to believe that Bech who, strangely enough, thinks of himself as "a creature of the third person, a character", really feels "this author wanting to set him aside, to get him off

his desk forever". Clearly there's life in the old dog yet. There are five somewhat interlocking tales in *Bech at Bay*, which finds its protagonist — who made his first appearance in *Bech: A Book* in 1970 and *Bech is Back* in 1982 — at "that advanced stage of authorship when his writing consisted mostly, it seemed, of contributions to Festschriften — slim volumes of tributes... in honour of this or that ancient companion in literature's heady battles". Bech, it will be recalled, has had a rather more modest output than his creator, to whom he is also a few years senior: starting his career in 1955 with a novel, *Travel Light* and achieving bestsellerdom in 1979 with *Think Big*, a book Bech considers a much lesser work than his little-appreciated masterpiece, *The Chosen* (1963). Regular Updike readers may not be surprised to learn that, despite his advancing years, Bech is still as sexually energetic as ever and remains attractive to women much younger than him-



Erica Wagner

encounters in Czechoslovakia reside in a cemetery whose guardians express a casual anti-Semitism that hints at an easy slide towards extermination. The tale meanders towards nothing much — that is the point of it, and is not a criticism — congealing, at its end, into the Czech of which Bech himself has no knowledge, as Updike hints at his creation's alienation from himself.

It's a fine story, perhaps less frivolous than the rest of the volume — a frivolity that makes for terrific entertainment. *Bech Presides* sees Henry reluctantly taking over the chairmanship of the Pory, a grand but unconvivial artistic society ready to vote itself into extinction as its ageing members can think of no younger candidates worthy of their august company. *Bech Pleads Guilty* sends him out to California to fight a libel case against an agent who, in a throw-off magazine article, he called an "arch-gouger". *Bech and the Bounty of Sweden* finds him at last rewarded — to his own extreme puzzlement — by the Swedish Academy. What these four tales have in common, aside from Updike's pempiracy, pace and weary good humour, is Bech's embolism in machinery beyond his control. It is this more than anything else that gives him his "third person" existence: he is clearly not the teller of his own tale. Is he an expression of his author's rueful doubts?

It might be a tempting conclusion to draw, were it not for *Bech Not*, in which Henry embraces action with black glee. This story, which had an outing in *The New Yorker*, grants Bech an author's dream: revenge upon his critics. Hearing of Lucas Mishner's death — Mishner had said Bech would never be touched by the American sublime — Bech feels "a creamy satisfaction". More bluntly "Mishner dead put another inch on his prick": surely useful for his frolics with Robin Teagarten, "post-Jewish", computer literate — and 26. A few days later, Bech is on a subway platform behind the English critic Raymond Featherwaite (proux and youlu. Featherwaite had called Bech's work "... you might guess what happens next". By the end of this wholly unbelievable but quite wonderful story, Bechman and Robin are striding about Manhattan in masks and capes wrecking their revenge — and though I say, wholly unbelievable, the trick of it is that, like all fine writing, it's not. John Updike makes you believe with a vigour that belies his years. *Bech at Bay* is dedicated to "the youngest people I know". No wonder.

## Russian poet who came out of Africa

There are the solemn names of Tsars, wrote the poet Blok "generals, inventors of instruments of death, torturers and martyrs; and alongside them, this one bright sound: Pushkin." Besides inspiring the Russian nation, Pushkin "hewed a window onto Europe" — Britain in particular, turning to Byron, Shakespeare and Scott for formal inspiration. Broadly speaking, however, his poetry — apart from *Eugene Onegin* — has not broken the translation barrier in the English-speaking world.

Alexander Pushkin (1799-1837) lived in times that saw a Tsar's assassination, Napoleonic invasion, Russian and Polish rebellions, and Russia's emergence as Europe's strongest military power. His life, as Elaine Feinstein comments, "has the resonance of a legend". He was of one eighth African blood; his great-grandfather, Abram Gannibal, the son of an Abyssinian vassal prince, was brought as a boy to Peter the Great's court, later achieving eminence as a military engineer. Pushkin missed out on childhood, lacking parental love and care — although he enjoyed the freedom of his father's library of French literature before going to school at the age of 12.



On leaving school he led a dissipated life in the capital before being exiled for six years in the South and on his father's bleak estate near Pskov, for his reckless liberal verse. He was summoned back to the capital by the new Tsar, the au-

### ANTONY WOOD PUSHKIN

By Elaine Feinstein  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20  
ISBN 0 297 81825 0

innocent! To flush in an embarrassment! She does not fully understand! And stealthily observe a satyr."

Pushkin stands before us in eyewitness descriptions: he was small, effervescent, mercurial, with a complete absence of pretension, long hair "curly at the ends" and elongated fingernails with which he peeled oranges — "when he decided to be friendly, nothing could compare with the sparkle, the wit and attractiveness of his speech". Among her quotations, Feinstein gives us verse translations of her own and she describes Pushkin as a writer with the facility of Byron, the sensuous richness of Keats and a beauty with reminiscent of Chaucer. To which I would add the poise and precision of Pope.

Drawing on hitherto unknown correspondence, Feinstein has sensational revelations about Pushkin's killer, D'Anthes, and the scheming Dutch Ambassador in St Petersburg, Van Heeckeren. She claims that the two had a homosexual relationship, which continued while D'Anthes was paying court to Pushkin's wife and, staggeringly, proceeded to marry her sister who would seem to have been already pregnant by him. Out of this *imbroglis* we hear the first coherent utterances of the "featherhead" Natalya from newly published letters. Movingly, she is more on Pushkin's side than incensed statements by Akhmatova and Tsveteva have led us to expect. It is a pity the publishers didn't allow more space for discussion of Pushkin's writings: the nature of *Boris Godunov*, which its author thought was Shakespeare but isn't; the late verse drama *Rusalka*, now accepted as completed, which is truly Shakespearean: the comparative temperature of love lyrics and so on. When Feinstein does discuss works in detail, she is highly illuminating — on *Eugene Onegin* and its deep-rootedness both in Russian life and in Pushkin's life, for example. Overall, this is the biography that we have long needed: sensitive, elegant and excellently researched, it brings Pushkin vividly before us.



Tony Bennett hands Louis Armstrong a portrait, painted by himself, in 1970. The next decade was Bennett's toughest

## The comeback kid

The Italian-American establishment should welcome this book. Tony Bennett (nee Benedetto), while admitting to some "mean streets escapades as a lad", was never attracted to the Mob. His father, who died sadly young, was of a poetic cast of mind, and throughout his life Bennett has encountered sympathetic hunger for literature and painting.

Still, he is too much of a realist to pretend that, having been a successful entertainer in the States for over 50 years, he could have avoided working for the Mob, and he admits, if rather obliquely, that one of his managers may have had unsavoury friends — but had the contacts too. He is to be admired even so in that he remained an employee rather than an intimate of the gangsters — an accolade it would have been impossible to award his hero, Sinatra.

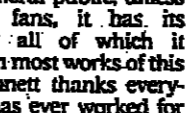
George Melly's latest book, *George Melly's Latest Book*, Don't Tell Sybil, is published by Heinemann, £17.99.

Then, in the Seventies, while living it up in Hollywood, everything went disastrously wrong. Cocaine grabbed him, profligate overspending made him almost bankrupt, he overdosed and almost died. But then, as with Job, it all righted itself. He kicked his habit, his son sorts out his finances, and he finds himself back at the top. Furthermore, completely unexpectedly, he becomes an icon to the kids, top of the bill at both jazz and rock festivals.

For anyone interested in showbiz over the past 50 years this book is, while rather shadowless, well worth reading. For the general public, unless convinced fans, it has its longuours, all of which it shares with most works of this genre. Bennett thanks everyone who has ever worked for him; baring for us. What's more, he demonstrates that the observations of celebrities can be as banal as everyone else's. Still, it's a decent record of a class act who has remained throughout a remarkably sympathetic human being.

### GEORGE MELLY THE GOOD LIFE

By Tony Bennett with Will Friedwald  
Simon & Schuster, £16.99  
ISBN 0 684 85872 X



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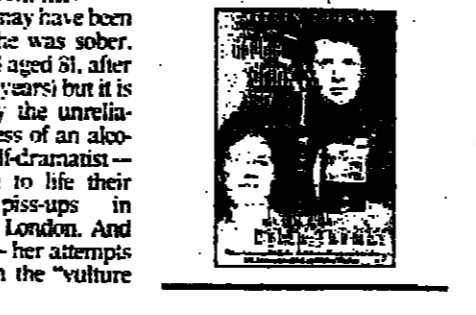
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## It's Dylan who has the last word, after all

Caitlin Thomas's transcript of her marriage to the poet Dylan Thomas is a catalogue of negative reinforcements: she claims never to have understood his intellectualism. She was "ignorant" of his work. Yet she is surprised that they were "complete strangers to one another". Her memoir almost misses the point that she failed because she failed to commune with Dylan where he was most true — in his work. His poetry was where he lived; his life was a masquerade. Without irony she remarks: "Without his gift he would not have been worthy of me."

### RUSSELL CELYN JONES DOUBLE DRINK STORY

By Caitlin Thomas  
Virago, £12.99  
ISBN 1 86049 560 5



women hunting him down in their flocks" — read as pointless exercises in self-abasement. "I never went to bed with a man unless I was drunk." One wonders how much alcoholism was a symptom of this ill-fated marriage. When Dylan was alive he was the recipient of constant criticism from Auden, Spender and C. Day Lewis. How badly did this hostility hurt him? How wretchedly drunk did he have to become to blot it out? Caitlin can only offer that he was a "Professional Baby" who "always wore his baby boy's fancy pants of whimsicality". As far as Caitlin is concerned, Dylan's mother bears the brunt



## A man with a mission

PEACE JOURNEY  
By Carl Bildt  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25  
ISBN 0 297 84331 9

CARL BILDIT'S experiences as EU peace negotiator on former Yugoslavia in 1995 and as High Representative of the international community in Bosnia 1996-97 do not underplay the difficulties of international co-operation in high-level diplomacy. The Dayton peace negotiations are baldly analysed, and Bildt has points to make about the transition to a new transatlantic peace coalition in the Balkans. He writes briskly, less self-serving than most politicians, and boldly analyses the back-knuckled power games that precipitated a brutal European conflict that is still unresolved.

## No regrets

PIAF: A Passionate Life  
By David Bret  
Robson Books, £17.95  
ISBN 1 86105 218 9

THE ASTOUNDING staminate of Piaf as a cultural icon is well illustrated by this biography that enthusiastically presents, though rarely analyses, all the factors that raise a chanteuse to diva status: the powerfully emotional songs, the private heartbreak, the raw life lived on the public stage, the attitude of an urban wit who dismissed Niagara Falls as "just a lot of water". The little Paris sparrow was a French Judy Garland; *Je ne regrette rien* is as enduring an anthem as *Somebody Over the Rainbow*. Like a rose, Piaf lived a wonderfully overblown life.

## Tail of talk

IF A LION COULD TALK  
By Stephen Budiansky  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20  
ISBN 0 297 81932 1

DR DOLITTLE doesn't get a look-in here. The title is from Wittgenstein: "If a lion could talk, we would not understand him." From the lion's point of view, we might not have anything to say that would interest him. Budiansky is wonderfully good on animal communication that works by body language; and he spells out the very different cognitive processes, the relevance of the well-adapted intelligence, imagination and movement of animals to their survival in the world, and the irrelevance of our own sentimental anthropomorphism. They don't care — and they're not sorry.

## Capital ideas

THE STOCKHOLDING SOCIETY  
By Will Hutton  
Polly Press, £45  
ISBN 0 7456 2078 7

# Food for hunge for evil

## Anna Warner on our...

The book is a history of the...

The book is a history of the...

## The tortur Powellism

The book is a history of the...

# BOOKS

## Food for a hunger for evil

Maina Warner on our enduring fascination with tales of terror

**P**rice Albert, freshly enshrined in his scintillating reimagined and shooting golden rays over Kensington Gardens, was unveiled this year in the same season as Bauhaus, premier Goth band, began touring again, after a silence of 15 years. Blue-eyed, pious, model familyman Albert was a Goth by family name, by geographical origin, by memorialisation in Gilbert Scott's masterpiece of Victorian medievalism, but he's hardly a Goth in the style of Bauhaus's lead singer, Pete Murphy, who, macabre and spectral thin, on a stage wreathed in dry ice, recently intoned once again the Gothic anthem, "Bela Lugosi's dead/Undead undead/undead". Gothic is very much with us still, in all its twisting polymorphousness.

In this wide-ranging and often witty study of Goths and Gothic, Richard Davenport-Hines has supplied a new, partisan tour guide to a site much visited recently, by Nina Auerbach and Fred Botting, among others. But if it wasn't so uncool — so unGothic — to show keenness, the author could be dubbed less a critic of the genre, than the Apostle of the Goths. He advocates Gothic irony, negativity, hatred of hypocrisy, belief in inescapable darkness and doomed nostalgia as the only honest responses to existence sine (as he charts it) the death of Satan and the departure of God replaced outside agency with human evil around the turn of the 18th century. The Gothic, in its masquerade of satanic forces and ineluctable horror, paradoxically embodies the good conscience of the times. "Goths," he writes, "are senseless-lyricists that there is much that should make us ashamed."

Although he seems to want to catch everything, from Goya to punk, under its rubric, the book predominantly focuses on Anglo-Gothic, and starts with the sublime, with the new appetite for savagery and cruelty as a means to visceral pleasure and moral uplift. Grand Tourists marvelled at natural wonders such as the

**GOthic**  
By Richard  
Davenport-Hines

4th Estate, £20  
ISBN 1 85702 498 2



Alps and the lethal activity of volcanoes. The horrid fantasies of the Neapolitan painter Salvator Rosa were much cultivated, and scenes such as witches pulling the teeth of hanging corpses and boiling babies adorned the drawing rooms of country houses of the aristocracy. Catholic scenery, both topographical and transcendental, supplied the theatre of elite aesthetics in the Georgian age. Hoary wildernesses were simulated on English greenwards; grotesques and caverns, tombs and obelisks, transmogrified Arcadia. Alexander Pope in his garden at Twickenham, Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill and, later, William Beckford at Fonthill Abbey, merged the perfection of the life and the art in their surroundings; the Gothic novel — *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), *Vathek* (1786) — rose from these early aristocratic self-fashionings.

Davenport-Hines explores the enthusiastic reproduction of an artificial past among the rich. His book also serves as a kind of elegy for country estates, castles, abbeys, farms, ornate follies, and their often gin-rack orientation and pastiche; these were "the power houses" of anti-reformist barons, where they displayed their wealth and their taste.

A pantheon of heroes, rather in the manner of a gallery of family ancestors, animates the book. Walpole is an admired progenitor; in *Otranto*, he struck the tone of excessive, pa-



Up for the Count: the 1931 film *Dracula*, starring Bela Lugosi, reasserted the power of Gothic in the 20th century

rodic burlesque, that, according to Davenport-Hines, informs true Gothic. The Marquis de Sade, more surprisingly, strikes another truly exemplary figure not as a supreme fiend, but as a reformer, a true shoot of the Enlightenment who recoiled in passion from the public ceremonies of cruelty that were staged by official statecraft and wildly parodied their excesses in his fiction.

There are passages where the author falls into special pleading for his cause. He sees Gothic as an admirable line of contemporary resistance to

fundamentalism, mass hysteria (Dianamania), "syrupy sentimentality about family life", and totalitarian utopianism, revolutionary and other. But these subversive politics don't altogether cohere with his portrait of the genre as uppercrust Whiggery, intrinsically reactionary and backward-looking, nor with its identification with catastrophe, pain, sin, humiliation, self-torment and torture. The lurid fantasies of evangelical Christians and recovered memory victims feed on Gothic dreams; posters for prayer meetings look like

heavy metal album covers, and vice versa, and the resemblance isn't altogether parody. If the irrational and the anarchic could be trusted to be on the side of the angels, there is no need for Gothic's restless climate of suspicion. And he weakens his case, too, almost fatally, when he chooses to conclude with eulogies to the splatpunk novelist Poppy Z. Brite and then inexplicably hails the glitzy Chapman brothers, in his very last words, as "Goth supermen".

A quotation from William Burroughs that "the face of

evil is always the face of total need" leads to the book's most valuable insight: that today's vampiric masquerade of fetishising, victimisation, dependency, wandering, plague, destruction and decay mimics contemporary ills. Gothic is thriving in symbiosis with globalised modernity because, in an act of homeopathic defencelessness, it incarnates hungry, homeless and tormented ghosts of our own making.

Marina Warner's *No Go The Bogyman* is published by Chatto & Windus, £25.

## The prophet of risk cries that the end is nigh

**ROSEMARY RIGHTER**

**THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM**  
By George Soros  
Little, Brown, £17.99  
ISBN 0 316 84916 2

**THE CRISIS OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM**

**A**s a speculative buccaneer, George Soros has made a legendary fortune out of ignoring the old saw that prophesy is fine, so long as you steer clear of the future. His latest "instant" book, which begins as a reworking of his idiosyncratic economic ideas but was hastily remapped after Russia's financial implosion in August, could as well have been titled *The End of Capitalism is Nigh*. It is openly, urgently, written in prophetic mode; and its subject, alarmingly in a man who has often guessed spectacularly right, is nothing less than the imminent collapse of the international financial system. More than that, he sees this as the punishment we deserve. In the past two decades, he insists, we have let our belief in "the magic of the marketplace" run to dangerous extremes.

What economists call *laissez faire*, and he rebels "market fundamentalism" — the belief that markets should be left free to operate by their own rules — has in his view usurped the social and political domains, to the point where freebooting capitalism has displaced the civilising influences of social codes and representative democracy.

So where Karl Popper, Soros's mentor as an LSE student and the overriding intellectual influence in his life, sees totalitarian tyrannies as the enemies of "the open society", his pupil declares free markets to be an even greater menace to liberty, democracy and law "than any totalitarian ideology". That is because when "what is right is subordinated to what is effective", market thinking creates "a deficiency of shared values".

As Soros readily concedes, this proposition is, on the face of it, nonsense. Economic and political freedoms march together. He relishes the heresy, which he explains by another — this time against orthodox liberal economic theory. The first half of this book, in many ways the most fascinating, takes issue with the notion that markets naturally tend to equilibrium. Nothing of the kind, he says: "markets are inherently unstable." They "produce chaos". And they do so because investors' guesses about what a market or company will do alter the way they actually perform. Trends set in; and when booms turn sour the reaction is "more like a tidal wave" than the orderly pendulum of classic theory.

A bit rich, this, from the speculator who famously broke the

Bank of England in 1992 — and who last week hinted that his attentions will again turn to sterling when the euro is launched. Yet Soros should not be summarily dismissed, and not only because of his vast charitable investments, through his Open Society Foundation, in nurturing the "common interest" of society in fragile new democracies.

The chapter in the second, "instant history", part of this book where he dissects what went wrong in Asia and why it will prove so hard to put right is not exactly profound; but it is as fair and frank a summary as I have seen — and blessedly free of the fashionable tendency to blame everything on the IMF. He is right that it erred more by intervening too little than too much.

But it's not obvious that global capitalism is the sole, or main culprit here. So what, then, of his central prophesy? *The Crisis of Global Capitalism* hit the bookstands just as capital markets were bouncing back out of the grave. That will not trouble him, any more than it is likely to affect sales. He believes that the autumn slump was a false bottom, that recovery will be short-lived, and that when boom really turns to bust the market's faulty corrective mechanisms will fail. We will then be in for global depression. "I can already see it," he writes, "discern the readings of the final crisis" — unless we act now.

**W**hen he has paraded the horses of the apocalypse, his survival strategy might be expected to be drastic. It is not. A bit more regulation here, supervision there — and support for the \$150 billion fund America has tentatively proposed to keep capital flowing to emerging economies. On capital controls, he rightly says that the aim should be to keep financial markets sufficiently stable to make these unnecessary.

The only lunatic idea is to turn the UN General Assembly into a global parliament, deciding "what laws are needed and how to enforce them". Soros may be right about the need for "a worldwide alliance of democratic countries" to promote an open society, but in the real world that is more likely to happen outside the UN. Soros demands a rethink, almost a (non)religious conversion; but his proposals have far more in common with Popper's "piecemeal engineering" than with Lenin's "What is to be done". After so much clanging of the Litine bell, it is a relief to find the wizard of risk still loyal to the wise incrementalism of his master.

## The tortured route from Powellism to Thatcherism

**T**he title of this blockbuster of a biography comes from its subject's explosive speech on immigration in 1968. "Like the Roman," Powell declared, "I seem to see the River Tiber foaming with much blood". The sine-chilling prophecy provoked headlines about "rivers of blood" and made him wish that he had stuck to the Latin or Virgil's *Aeneid*.

Powell's memory of Virgil, however, had let him down. "I can't find the Roman," he told John Biffin, who found him after the speech searching his classical texts. It is in fact the Sybil who sees the blood-red Tiber. Since Virgil describes the Sybil as storming in her cave before chanting "wrapping the truth in darkness", Powell could perhaps be forgiven for having envisaged a more dignified alter ego.

So it was "like the Roman" for Powell and so it is too for his chosen biographer, Simon Heffer, who notes Powell's error but was never likely to call his book "Like the Sybil". Heffer is at pains to point out that this is not an "official" biography — Powell's only condition was the withholding of his most private papers until after his death — but his authorised version. But despite Heffer's evident admiration for Powell, he has avoided the pitfalls of hagiography.



Like the Roman: Enoch Powell came to grief over the 1968 "Rivers of Blood" speech

**ROBERT SHEPHERD**

**LIKE THE ROMAN**  
The Life of Enoch Powell

By Simon Heffer  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £25  
ISBN 0 297 84286 2



his early misogyny and romantic "crushes" on young men. Heffer is enlightening, too, on his unorthodox Christianity.

An important find in Powell's papers is evidence for the long-held suspicion that in 1958 Powell and his Treasury colleague, Nigel Birch, were instrumental in preventing the general Chancellor of the Exchequer, Peter Thorneycroft, compromising with the Cabinet on spending. Since Heffer takes the over-simplified view that defeat for the Treasury in 1958 culminated in the inflationary explosion of the 1970s, Powell emerges as the hero, writing to Birch of the need "to screw the Chancellor to the sticking point and, this done, to present the pistol at the right moment".

The cabinet's readiness to find £40 million in cuts and increased charges for Thorneycroft's successor, having voted the final £50 million of Thorneycroft's demands, is testimony to what a rough trade politics can be and to Thorneycroft's astute approach. Heffer notes that it was not the last time that Powell misread the character of other politicians, but here the demand to scrap the family allowance for the

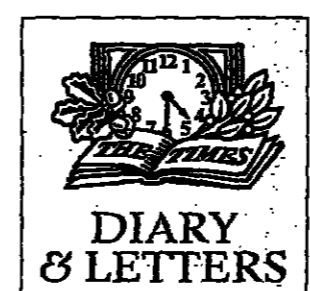
second child was kamikaze politics. No wonder Rab Butler rejected this assault on Tory social policy. It was Butler, however, who received Powell's support for the Tory leadership in 1963. It is disappointing that Heffer fails to add anything significant on the 1963 crisis: neither are there any great revelations about Powell's U-turns on Europe.

The overriding impression is what a disastrous politician

Powell was. The River Tiber speech was a massive miscalculation and finished his frontbench career. Two years later he helped to put Heath into Number Ten, but as his wife recognised, "it was the end" for him. In 1974 he helped to elect Heath, but at the cost of leaving Parliament. He naively trusted Wilson on the negotiation of British membership of Europe, but the anti-EEC campaigners were routed.

Heffer's self-imposed task of sparing anybody else from having to write about Powell has resulted in an encyclopaedic tome. Its sheer size suggests a story that must be told on a Churchillian scale. However, the chronicle of Powell's countless rubber-chicken circuit speeches becomes tedious during the 480 pages allotted to his backbench exile after 1968. Of course, understanding the evolution of "Powellism" — the marriage of *laissez faire* economics, monetarism and English nationalism — and its relevance to "Thatcherism" is vital to understanding politics today. As a guide to Powell's political odyssey, however, Heffer crosses the same terrain too often.

**John Julius Norwich's** Christmas card to his friends is a small anthology of literary delights called *A Christmas Cracker*, and two collections of them — naturally entitled *Christmas Crackers* and *More Christmas Crackers* — have already been published for a wider audience by Penguin. The wily vicar has an especially good eye for one-liners, among them is this remark by Greek scholar Gilbert Murray: "It's a great nuisance getting old and never knowing whether you haven't said 'Jerusalem' when you meant 'Paddington'." Norwich ends his booklet with Robert Frost's even more caustic epigram: "Forgive, O Lord, my little jokes on Thee! And I'll forgive Thy great big one on me."



**Fans of Patrick O'Brian** will soon be able to read two forgotten novels published by him in 1930 and 1938 respectively. *The British Library* is about to republish his books *Caesar* and *Hussein*. The first, written when he was only 14, is the story of a panda-leopard set in the Himalayas, while

*Hussein is a tale of a boy growing up in British India. The edition will be an expensive one but there is promise of a bookshop version in the year 2000.*

**RAYMOND WERGAN** writes from Devon to alert us to a shameless marketing ploy by Bloomsbury. The children's fantasy *Harry Potter* and the *Philosopher's Stone* by J. K. Rowling is so popular with adults that the book has been reissued "with a different cover" and at "the grown-up price of £6.99" — two pounds dearer than the original edition. He continues: "While regretting the passing of the plain brown wrapper, I wonder if there are other examples of seasonal exploitation of the older generation?"

## A sultan's crusade for unity

**DOMINIC BRADBURY**  
THE BOOK OF SALADIN

By Tariq Ali  
Verso, £17  
ISBN 1 85984 834 6



**O**ur most familiar image of the Crusades is an ambitious book within an even broader project, the second in a quartet of historical novels in which writer and film-maker Tariq Ali is attempting to explore and explain the great clash of cultures between the Islamic world and Christianity, arguably as much a part of world politics today as it was in the days of Saladin. As one might expect, the theme of religious conflict threads throughout and the problems of unifying a divided Islamic world to fight off an Imperial aggressor — and the constant battle for Palestine as the centre of the Islamic, Christian and the Jewish traditions — are intended to reflect the troubled present.

Saladin's greatest achievement was in achieving Islamic unity among the Arab states — even if it was short-lived — for his jihad against the Crusaders and, in doing so, proving the potential power that comes from a single cause. Renowned for his knightly courtesy, Saladin comes across in Ali's novel as a worthy but flawed hero: generous, intelli-

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narrator's voice mingles with that of Saladin himself and those of a handful of the many retainers and lovers who surround the Sultan.

The result is an engaging, often entertaining, sometimes enthralling book. Tariq Ali avoids the dry dangers of a historically correct framework by drawing out the different stories of his players, real and imagined, and weaving in humour and sexuality. He manages to capture an element of an exotic, far away world of eunuchs, knights, assassins and slaves. Yet ultimately an academic feel tends to edge out much of the adventure that surrounds Saladin's life. The great expeditions and "the mother of all battles" for Jerusalem are anti-climaxes in the dramatic structure of the book and the messages about the cost of division and disorder are repetitive. One comes away intrigued, but also with the feeling that this could have been a more enticing book connecting serious themes with a greater sense of excitement about the subject.

LISTINGS

Elgar's Third at the Hallé

RECOMMENDED TODAY
Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Marit Hargre
LONDON
PETER PAN: Justin Slinger in the role...



Mark Elder conducts the Hallé in Manchester



Christmas Eve revellers in Derek Deane's English National Ballet staging of The Nutcracker

NEW WEST END SHOWS
Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London
CHICAGO: Martin Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival...

Seasonal sweet turned sour

There is no shortage of Christmas entertainment for dance lovers in London this month. Britain's three biggest dance companies are in town...

DANCE

Godfather, who, it seems, can't keep his hungry eyes off her. Bearing gifts like sexual bribes, he virtually stalks Clara throughout Act 1...

lustrous choreography for the Grand Pas de Deux (shining brightly against Deane's tame writing elsewhere)

DEBRA CRAINE

FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

THE BOYS (18): Uncomfortable and powerful Australian drama, with David Wenham as the prisoner whose homecoming sparks violence...

Wales and whinges

They have topped the album and singles charts this year, and been showered with awards and accolades, but Manic Street Preachers are not going to be placated by any of that old flannel...

POP

Manic Street Preachers Wembley Arena
thing, it was that the Manics do know a thing or two about tunes. From the insurgent melodrama of Everything Must Go...

Metal à la mode

Halloween. Walls had been draped with suitably scary strands, while the gothic stage set resembled a spooky silver cave. With a recently released, critically acclaimed third album called Powertrip...

LISA VERRICO

CLASSICAL CONCERTS
ST BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL
THE LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA
OPERA & BALLET
THE NUTCRACKER

THEATRES
ALHAMBRA AT THE ALHAMBRA
APOLLO VICTORIA
APOLLO THEATRE
APOLLO VICTORIA
APOLLO VICTORIA

THEATRE
Kellen triumphal
One of the masterpieces
New-way
Baroque
THE NOTTE DI NATALE

Bargains of the festive season: from Christmas markets in Bavaria to the Valley of the Kings

# Slope off for a peaceful break

WITH Christmas only eight days away, a surprising number of festive breaks are still available. Tony Dave writes.

It could be a sign of impending recession or just that more holidays are on the market this year. But whether you fancy a country cottage or hotel in Britain, a Mediterranean resort, a trip down the Nile or something even more unusual, it is still possible to book them.

**COTTAGES** in the West Country are on offer over Christmas from Farm and Cottage Holidays. Properties available include Pipers Lodge in open countryside in North Devon with a nature trail on the land. It sleeps six and costs £396 for a week from Monday. Details: 01237 479698.

**EQUALLY** rural, but confusingly named, is Pety France Hotel. It is set in extensive grounds at Badminton in the Cotswolds. The hotel, part of the Consort Group, is offering readers of *The Times* a 10 per cent discount on its festive breaks. A two-day package taking in Christmas lunch and evening buffet plus dinner on either Christmas Eve or Boxing Day costs £197 with a three-day stay available for £247. Details: 0500 824889.

**YORK MINSTER** is one of the most perfect places to enjoy Christmas services, and Superbreak is offering a three-day package to an hotel in the city centre for £199. Arrive on Christmas Eve and enjoy full board and plenty of entertainment including carol singers. Details: 01904 679999.

**THE CANARIES** for Christmas is still possible with First Choice which has deals available from Monday. A week in a Grand Canary hotel costs £299 with a flight from Leeds Bradford Airport. A flight-only deal is available on the same day to Lanzarote from Manchester for £109 return. Details: 0870-750 0100.

**LANZAROTE** can be reached even more cheaply with Lunn Poly, which has return flights from Glasgow and Newcastle on December 23 for £79. The travel agent's Christmas packages also include a week's Thomson self-catering holiday in the Luxmar Apartments, Benidorm, for £254, based on four sharing, with a flight from Newcastle on Tuesday. Details from Lunn Poly Holiday Shops.

**CHRISTMAS** on the slopes is also possible with Lunn Poly which has a week's half-board in an apart-

ment hotel at Arinsal, Andorra, available from £329. The price for this Crystal Holiday is based on five sharing, with a flight from Gatwick on Sunday. Details from Holiday Shops.

**FREE** children's holidays to the French Alps for Christmas and New Year are on offer from Ski Spirit on the basis of one free place per family, with other children and adults receiving a discount. Fly from Stansted on Sunday or January 3 and a week in a catered chalet at Morzine now costs adults £298. The child discounts mean that a family of four would pay £695. Children's activities and ski classes are available at extra cost. Details: 01252 616789.

**A SENSE** of history as well as luxury will accompany Christmas at the Hotel Adlon in Berlin, for it is situated on the Pariser Platz with emotive views of the Brandenburg Gate. The three-night festive package includes a six-course gourmet dinner on Christmas Eve, a modest four-course lunch on the day itself, tickets to the opera and a sightseeing tour on Boxing Day. A swimming pool and health spa are available for those seeking more exercise, but all this comes at a price: about £1,150 a couple with travel extra. Details: 0800 868888.

**A BAVARIAN** Christmas is on offer from Moswin, which has escorted holidays based in the picturesque town of Coburg available from Monday for £595. Fly from Heathrow and enjoy a week's half-board including a festive buffet in a local hotel plus visits to Christmas markets, the theatre and the city of Bamberg. Details: 0116-271 9922.

**ARRIVE** on the Nile for Christmas and then sail into the new year enjoying the temples and other magnificent relics of antiquity close to the shores, including the Valley of the Kings. The package from Sales Worldwide costs £1,490 but also includes a stay in Cairo as well as full board on the Ra II cruise. The holiday begins with a flight from Heathrow to Cairo on Tuesday, with the connecting flight to Luxor as part of the deal. Details: 01306 885991.

**THE RED SEA** resort of Eilat should promise a warm as well as happy Christmas and a week's half-board from Sunday or Monday is still on offer at the Palmira Hotel with Longwood Holidays from £499. Fly from Luton or Gatwick. Details: 0181-748 4494.

**WINTER** specials feature in a new brochure from Hayes and Jarvis, which is offering savings of as much as £150 on holidays in the first three months of the year. Prices start at £279 for a week at Hurghada in Egypt, with a week in Bangkok available for £489. All-inclusive holidays in the Caribbean and Kenya have also been discounted. Details: 01855 468888.

**BALI**, Hong Kong and Malaysia feature in early 1999 deals from Premier Holidays. A week at a hotel on Sanur Beach, Bali, is avail-



Make the most of new year at the last elephant march in Kerala, India, or go in search of elusive and endangered gorillas (below)

## Heed the call of the wild in 1999

THE last Great Elephant March in Kerala, southern India, is the highlight of a series of wildlife holiday opportunities available in the first weeks of the new year. Tony Dave writes.

The march, which the Government has decided to discontinue in 2000, is a three-day gathering of 101 decorated and bejewelled elephants ending in Kovalam.

You can book locally to see the magnificent animals and enjoy the many festival events on a fortnight's holiday with Somak Holidays, which begins with a flight from Gatwick on January 10. The price, with flights and B&B at a hotel close to the beach, is £589.

Rare birds will be the attraction a few hundred miles south on a Naturetrek visit to Sri Lanka which starts on January 23. The white-throated flowerpecker and yellow-fronted barbet should be seen, together with migrant species from the Himalayas, on a ten-

day trip which takes in many of the country's spectacular sites. The cost is a bargain £990 including return flights from London, hotel accommodation, all meals and expert guides.

Birds closer to home will be the target of a midwinter wild goose chase from February 18 to 21 with Whistler Breaks. Based at a top hotel in Dumfries, the trip will go in search of barnacle geese, goosanders and golden eagles along the Scottish Solway coast and costs £296 with all meals.

Endangered gorillas will be sought out on a 16-day trip to Uganda with Wildlife Worldwide which takes in several national parks with the whole range of Africa's wild animals. Sadly, this very special trip is hardly a bargain at £3,375 with flights and all meals.

Details: Somak, 0181-423 3000; Naturetrek, 01962 733051; Whistler, 01743 718964; Wildlife Worldwide, 0181-667 9158.



Racing trip host Julian Wilson

### MIDWINTER ESCAPES

A HOST of sunshine holidays are on offer in the new year for those who cannot face bleak midwinter days in Britain after all the excitement of the Christmas period. Sri Lanka and Israel are the destinations for bargain breaks with Eclipse. A fortnight's B&B on the Indian Ocean island costs just £489 with a return flight from Manchester on January 5. A week's B&B at a three-star hotel in Ovda, Israel, costs £219 with a flight from Gatwick on January 10. Details: 0990 010203.

**IF HOT** skiing instead of warm sunshine is your preferred winter pursuit, deals are still available from January 2 with the Skiers Travel Bureau. Choose from a week in catered chalet accommodation in the French Alps from £369 including return flights from Gatwick, or ten nights in a catered chalet in Whistler, Canada, for £769 with a flight from Heathrow. Details: 01855 468888.

**EXECUTIVE** skiing holidays for those who cannot spare a week away are on offer from Direct Line Holidays. Three nights in a catered chalet in the Portes du Soleil region, with access to excellent ski runs in France and Switzerland, cost £399 with Friday night departures from

Heathrow or London City Airport to Geneva, starting on January 16. Most meals and wine are included. Details: 0181-239 8000.

**JULIAN WILSON**, who retired this year as BBC racing correspondent, will be hosting a 12-day holiday

which takes in Cape Town's premier race meeting, the J & B Metropolitan, in February. Visits to top stud farms and trainers, plus the opportunity to explore the area's tourist attractions, are part of an all-inclusive package worth £1,149. It is available from Cape Sports & Leisure. Details: 01296 689015.

**A NIGHT** at the theatre with dinner beforehand should lift those jaded spirits, especially when the package is available in London from as little as £27.50. That price will provide a ticket for *Boogie Nights* at the Savoy Theatre and dinner at Simpson's-in-the-Strand. The Theatrical Diversions programme from the Savoy Group also combines dinner in the hotel's top restaurants with a ticket for *Amadeus* for a total of £55. Details: 0171-936 8888.

**LONDON** hotels are also available at special rates in January through The Hotel Directory,

which is offering three nights for the price of two at six centrally located properties. Prices start from £94 for three nights' B&B in a three-star hotel in Bayswater. Details: 0181-770 0123.

**AN ITALIAN** winter wonderland is being promised by Italian Expressions, which is now offering four nights for the price of three at a five-star hotel in Taormina, Sicily. Overlooking Naxos Bay and across from Mount Etna, the Grand Hotel Timeso sits alongside an ancient Greek amphitheatre. The package costs £793 including return scheduled flights, B&B and car hire for four days, and is available until the end of February. Details: 0171-435 2525.



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Law Report December 17 1998 House of Lords

Settlement with one discharges liability of both

Jameson and Another v Central Electricity Generating Board

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Hoffman, Lord Hope of Craighead and Lord Clyde

1976 and that the quantum of the claim was £142,000.

The claim was for damages for exposure to asbestos, during the period the deceased was working at the defendant's premises, while employed by Babcock Energy Ltd.

Mr Ian McLaren, QC and Mr Simon Beard for the CEGB; Mr Ronald J. Walker, QC and Mr Anthony Coleman for the executors.

LORD HOPE said that before his death the deceased had brought a separate action against Babcock for damages for personal injury due to asbestos exposure at various places where he had worked during his employment.

Just before he died he had accepted £80,000 in full and final settlement and satisfaction of all the claims of action in respect of which [he] claimed in the statement of claim.

It was assumed that during the period when he worked at the CEGB premises the deceased had been exposed to asbestos as a result of breach of duty both on the part of Babcock and the CEGB and the trial of the preliminary issues had proceeded on the basis that they were concurrent tortfeasors.

The issue at stake was whether, under section 1(1) of the 1976 Act, as substituted by section 3(1) of the Administration of Justice Act 1982, the CEGB would have been liable, if death had not ensued, to the deceased's action of damages.

The question had an additional significance because section 4 of the Act, as substituted, provided that in assessing damages in respect of a person's death in an action under the Act the benefits which accrued to any person from his estate or otherwise as a result of his death should be disregarded.

The widow had thus inherited the whole of the £80,000 which was received from the employer under the settlement. As that was a benefit which accrued to her as a result of the death it had to be disregarded.

The situation, therefore, was that if the deceased would have been able to recover damages from the CEGB notwithstanding his settlement with Babcock, the executors would be entitled to recover damages against the CEGB but to do so to the full extent of their claim without any set-off for the damages which the deceased had already received under the settlement.

The CEGB for its part would be entitled to maintain proceedings against Babcock for a contribution towards the sum paid to the executors, notwithstanding the fact that Babcock had already entered into a full and final settlement of the deceased's claim against it.

Once the agreed sum had been paid, his claim against the defendant would have been satisfied. Satisfaction discharged the tort and was a bar to any further action in respect of it.

If it followed that if the claim was for the whole amount of the loss for which the defendant was one of the concurrent tortfeasors was liable to the plaintiff in damages, satisfaction of the claim against him would have the effect of extinguishing the claim against the other concurrent tortfeasors.

The effect of a subsequent action being raised against another alleged concurrent tortfeasor there were limits to the inquiry which a judge could undertake.

He could not allow the plaintiff to open up the question whether the amount which he had agreed to accept from the first concurrent tortfeasor under the settlement represented full value for what had been claimed. That kind of inquiry, if permitted, could lead to endless litigation.

The question, therefore, was not whether a plaintiff had received full value of his claim but whether the sum which he had received in settlement of it was intended to be in full satisfaction of the tort.

In the instant case the words used could not be construed as meaning that the sum which the deceased agreed to accept was in part satisfaction only of his claim of damages. It was expressly accepted in full and final settlement and satisfaction of all his causes of action in the statement of claim. The terms of the settlement with the employer extinguished his claim of damages against the other tortfeasor.

The second question which arose on the facts of the case was that the deceased died before the date which was due under the settlement had been paid. The problem was not due to any failure on the employer's part to perform its obligations under the settlement. It was simply one of timing.

The issue was whether the settlement was subject to a condition which suspended its effect for any purpose until the sum due had been fully paid up by the employer.

His Lordship would apply the same reasoning as in R v Turner (1974) AC 851 and hold that the date as from which the claim of damages was to be treated as having been satisfied by reason of the settlement was the date when the settlement was entered into subject only to a resolutive condition which would deprive the settlement of that effect if the plaintiff was unable to recover the payment due under the settlement.

In the instant case the words used could not be construed as meaning that the sum which the deceased agreed to accept was in part satisfaction only of his claim of damages. It was expressly accepted in full and final settlement and satisfaction of all his causes of action in the statement of claim. The terms of the settlement with the employer extinguished his claim of damages against the other tortfeasor.

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So, as the settlement which the deceased entered into before his death was implemented in full by the employer, nothing which it had agreed to pay having been left unpaid, its effect was to discharge the claim of damages against the other tortfeasors with effect from the date of the settlement.

The executors could not therefore satisfy the requirements of section 1(1) of the 1976 Act because the CEGB would not have been liable, if death had not ensued, to an action of damages brought by the deceased in respect of the same tort.

LORD BROWNE-WILKINSON and LORD HOFFMANN agreed.

LORD CLYDE, concurring in the result, said that he did not find the words used in the settlement readily open to a construction which resolved the issue one way or the other.

A plaintiff could make it clear in an agreement to settle an action whether or not he was reserving his right to go against another person. The question was what view the law was to take if he had failed to make his position clear.

It was a plain matter of policy to secure that litigation should be terminated and successive claims discouraged. As a matter of policy it seemed that where the matter was left in the air a settlement with one of several parties who were jointly

and severally liable to the same plaintiff should involve a release of the others.

But beyond all of that the basic consideration both of policy and principle had to be that while those injured by a tort committed by others should be compensated through the process of law, they should not be enabled to recover damages twice over.

Such a result effected the basic principles of reparation and, while it was accepted as a possible consequence of the operation of section 4 of the 1976 Act it was not to be regarded as an acceptable consequence of an accord and satisfaction.

LORD LLOYD, dissenting, said that if the law was that the claim under the 1976 Act was now barred on the ground that the deceased's claim against his employer was settled before his death, even though that claim was settled for less than two-thirds of the deceased's loss, that result was most unjust.

However, a judge with unrivalled experience in personal injuries litigation had held that it was not the law. That decision would be upheld by the Court of Appeal in an equally impressive judgment. His Lordship could find no error in either judgment.

Solicitors: Dibb Lupton Alsop, Birmingham; Thompsons.

New parties cannot be added

Jordan Grand Prix Ltd v Baltic Insurance Group v Other

Before Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Lloyd of Berwick, Lord Steyn, Lord Hoffmann and Lord Millett

Article 11 of the Convention on Jurisdiction and the Enforcement of Judgments in Civil and Commercial Matters, signed at Brussels in 1968, which provided that an insurer could bring proceedings against a defendant only in the courts of the contracting state where the defendant was domiciled, applied to all insurers wherever domiciled.

An insurance company from Lithuania, a non-contracting state, was therefore prevented from adding Irish parties to its counterclaim in proceedings brought against it in England by an English company.

Although the provisions of article 11 were stated not to affect the right to bring a counterclaim in the court in which the original claim was pending, "counterclaim" was there to be construed as meaning a counterclaim against the original plaintiff.

The House of Lords so held in dismissing an appeal by the Baltic Insurance Group from the decision of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Staughton, Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice Robert Walker) (7th Times, November 14, 1997; [1998] 1 WLR 1069) upholding the decision of Mr Justice Langley that, following the commencement of proceedings against it by Jordan Grand Prix Ltd, the English courts had no jurisdiction to determine Baltic's counterclaim against Quay Financial Software Ltd, an Irish company.

Article 11, in section 3 of the Convention, set out in Schedule 1, as substituted by the Civil Jurisdiction and Judgments Act 1992, provides that "an insurer may bring proceedings only in the courts of the contracting state in which the defendant is domiciled". The provisions of this section shall not affect the right to bring a counterclaim in the court in which ... the original claim is pending.

Mr Anthony Trace, QC and Miss Rebecca Stubbs for Baltic; Mr Richard Southern for the Irish parties.

LORD STEYN said that the first question was whether article 11 was applicable to any insurer wherever domiciled, as submitted by the Irish parties, or only to an insurer domiciled in a contracting state, as submitted by Baltic.

Article 11 had to be construed in the context of the scheme of the Brussels Convention. Article 2 contained the general principle that persons domiciled in a contracting state should, wherever their nationality, be sued in the courts of that state.

Section 3 of the Convention was a self-contained and exclusive code governing insurance. Contrary to submissions made on behalf of Baltic, an insurer could not in respect of matters relating to insurance fall back on other provisions of the Convention. The rival interpretations of article 11 had to be judged on their basic premise.

The language of article 11 was plain. It spoke of "an insurer" contained no language suggestive of a limitation to insurers who were domiciled in a contracting state. By contrast, in article 8 the words "an insurer who is not domiciled in a contracting state" were used.

Further, as counsel for the Irish parties had pointed out, article 11 was permissive as well as prohibitive. It only conferred jurisdiction to hear a claim brought by an insurer on the courts of the contracting state in which the defendant

were domiciled. Apart from an agreement on jurisdiction under article 12, no other provision in section 3 permitted an insurer to bring proceedings in a matter relating to insurance against a defendant.

Unless article 11 applied to all insurers, wherever domiciled, an insurer who was not domiciled in a contracting state would not in matters relating to insurance be able to bring proceedings in a contracting state against a defendant domiciled in a contracting state.

Finally, it had to be borne in mind that the purpose of section 3 was "to protect the insured who is most frequently faced with a predetermined contract the clauses of which are no longer negotiable and who is in a weaker economic position". The structure of the Convention therefore suggested that the narrower interpretation ought to be preferred.

Unlike article 6.1 and 6.2 contained in section 2 of the Convention (providing for special jurisdiction in respect of various matters in insolvency proceedings), section 3 in dealing with matters relating to insurance did not confer on a plaintiff the right to join co-defendants or third parties.

As Lord Hoffmann put it in argument it would involve a striking asymmetry if a defendant had a right to join new parties to a counterclaim, but also a counterclaim against new parties.

Baltic had submitted that such an interpretation would promote the objective of non-fragmentation of legal proceedings and that a policy of hearing related matters in one set of proceedings.

His Lordship accepted the general proposition, but what at first glance might seem a reasonable argument broke down when one examined contextual considerations which bore on the problem.

There were three such factors which pointed to a narrower interpretation of counterclaim in article 11.

The structure of the Convention was important. The general principle was that national courts of the contracting state in which the defendant was domiciled were to have jurisdiction; see the first paragraph of article 2.

Derogations from that principle were carefully circumscribed in articles 12 to 16. Those provisions set out when a defendant in a contracting state might or had to be sued in the courts of another contracting state.

The right to counterclaim was a special jurisdiction, it was a derogation from the general principle. It had therefore to be restrictively construed. It was rightly conceded by Baltic that as a matter of language "counterclaim" in article 11 was capable of accommodating the wider and narrower meanings. The structure of the Convention therefore suggested that the narrower interpretation ought to be preferred.

Unlike article 6.1 and 6.2 contained in section 2 of the Convention (providing for special jurisdiction in respect of various matters in insolvency proceedings), section 3 in dealing with matters relating to insurance did not confer on a plaintiff the right to join co-defendants or third parties.

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Solid cross-claim necessary

In re Greenacre Publishing Ltd

Before Mr Justice Lloyd

On an application to strike out a bankruptcy petition, the court must be satisfied that on a substantial hearing the petition would inevitably be dismissed. Thus where the applicant did not dispute the debt on which the petition was based but sought to bring a cross-claim which it claimed would extinguish the debt, or reduce it below the insolvency limit of £750, there must be clear evidence that the applicant had a solid cross-claim capable of reducing the debt.

Mr Justice Lloyd so held in the Chancery Division dismissing the application of Greenacre Publishing Ltd, the windings-up petition brought by the Manson Group Ltd, to strike out an abuse of the process of the court.

Mr Mark Sefton for Greenacre Publishing; Miss Sally Barber for the Manson Group.

MR JUSTICE LLOYD said that the debt on which the petition was based was approximately £13,000 allegedly owed for the printing and preparation of the May issue of a magazine called Club on Monthly for which the Manson Group Ltd had struck out an abuse of the process of the court.

The full delivery of bound copies reached the company's distributors on 5 May, reaching the bookshelves somewhat later than usual and apparently in such a way as to miss a number of the dates featured in some of the advertising.

The company contended that it was a condition of the agreement between itself and the petitioner that the petitioner would produce the magazine no later than April 28 so that it would be on sale by April 30, and that that delay had particularly serious consequences in terms of reduced sales and lost advertising revenue and that, although the debt might be due, it was matched and overtopped by a substantial counterclaim.

His Lordship considered that the appropriate test to apply was set out by Mr Justice Ferris in Re a Company (No 3779 of 1990) [1991] BCC 688:

"The test which I ought to apply is the test which appears from Smeagone Securities Ltd v Gregory (1980) Ch 570 and Mann v Goldstein (1968) 1 WLR 1091, that is to say that if I can see now that the petition, if and when it comes on for substantive hearing, is bound to be dismissed because the locus standi of the petitioner is disputed, then it will be appropriate to strike out the petition and not to leave them on file with a view to their coming before the court at some future time, when the result will inevitably be the one that I have indicated."

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I sincerely trust that the beneficiary of substantial libel damages, and it is therefore with very real sincerity that I wish Messrs Stewart and Francis the greatest of success with their publication, that they may be better able to pay my award in full. What more compelling reason could there be for buying this book?

Sir Geoffrey Bentwood QC  
4 Lawn Buildings, Temple EC4

Maintenance contract liable to VAT

Trustees of the Nell Gwynn House Maintenance Fund v Commissioners of Customs and Excise

Before Lord Browne-Wilkinson, Lord Slynn of Hadley, Lord Nolan, Lord Clyde and Lord Hutton

When the trustees of the maintenance fund of a block of flats entered into contracts of employment with individual members of staff who cleaned and maintained the building, they were supplying services which were liable to value-added tax.

The House of Lords so held, allowing an appeal by the Commissioners of Customs and Excise from a decision dated December 21, 1996 of the Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Butler-Sloss, Lord Justice Swinton Thomas and Sir Christopher Slade) allowing an appeal by Graham Harvey, from a House of Maintenance Fund, from a judgment of Mr Justice Popplewell on October 18, 1994 upholding the dismissal by a VAT tribunal sitting in London on June 27, 1994 of the trustees' appeal from the rejection of their claim for a refund of VAT.

Mr Nigel Pleating, QC and Mr Michael Kent, QC, for the commissioners; Mr Roderick Cordara, QC and Miss Penelope Cargill-Thompson.

LORD SLYNN said that since 1993 three partners in a firm of solicitors, Graham Harvey, had been trustees of the Nell Gwynn House Maintenance Fund.

An untaxed agreement of appointment made between the superior lessor of the premises, NGH Apartments Ltd, the freeholder, Rego Properties establishment, and Graham Harvey, the latter as trustee of the fund undertook to employ and keep such staff to perform the though necessary to manage, maintain and clean the building.

Graham Harvey were to be entitled to remuneration of £17,000 a year plus VAT.

There were 435 flats in the block, 270 of which were let by the landlords or their predecessors. The lords or their predecessors. The staff consisted of a general manager and 17 others working under the general manager's supervision, including a house manager, porters, night supervisor, clerks, engineer and cleaners.

A large proportion of the functions of the general manager and his administration staff consisted of sub-letting some of the flats. The general manager and his staff were all employed by the maintenance trustees expressly in their capacity as maintenance trustees and paid out of the maintenance fund.

Shortly before handing over to Graham Harvey the previous maintenance trustees voluntarily disclosed to the Commissioners of Customs and Excise that there had been an underpayment of VAT in respect of salaries and wages of staff employed by the trustees for the period June 10, 1990 to March 31, 1993 in the sum of £134,064.47.

That sum was paid out of the maintenance fund but it was made plain that the trustees would seek repayment should it be found that the voluntary disclosure was incorrect. In November 1993, the commissioners ruled that the voluntary disclosure had been correctly made.

The first three issues raised by the dispute between the parties were: 1 Whether the maintenance trustees merely supplied a service consisting of the arranging for staff to be provided to carry out the purposes for which the maintenance fund was to be applied or whether the trustees themselves supplied the services in the form of activities carried out by the staff for such purposes;

2 Whether the consideration received by the trustees for whichever of those two alternative services they supplied by way of maintenance amount by way of maintenance contributions, in so far as attributable to salaries and wages, or whether it was only the maintenance trustees' remuneration, or whether it was some other amount; and

3 Whether it made any difference to liability for VAT that the maintenance contributions were, after deduction of their own remuneration, held by the maintenance trustees on trust to the nature of supply, it was plain that for VAT purposes there was a distinction between the case where A paid B for services to be provided by B and the case where A put B in funds so that B could arrange for C to provide the services.

His Lordship said that Mrs

In one case it was the provision of services which constituted the supply; in the other it was the arranging for services to be provided which constituted the supply.

The tribunal found that the trustees made a supply to the tenants by supplying the services of staff thereby enhancing the enjoyment and amenity of the flats and building as a whole.

The tribunal was also satisfied that the maintenance contributions paid by tenants to the fund were capable in law of amounting to consideration for the provision of services by the trustees to the tenants.

His Lordship said that in his opinion the tribunal's analysis of the position was correct. It might well be that the trustees could have fulfilled their obligations by contracting with a third party for the provision of staff services.

Then they would simply have arranged for those services to be provided. But they did not do that. They entered into contracts of employment or service with individual members of staff and it was plain from those contracts that the individuals were employed directly by the trustees.

Had they needed to sue for wages or breach of an employer's duty, the maintenance trustees would have been the appropriate defend-

ant. Conversely it was the trustees who engaged and could have sacked the employees.

The fact that the three solicitors concerned were described as the "maintenance trustees" did not prevent them from contracting as employers with the staff they engaged to carry out the services.

Moreover, it would be wrong and artificial to regard the suppliers of the services as the individual employees.

When the trustees took the moneys which were in the maintenance fund to pay the staff to carry out the trustee's obligations they were receiving the moneys beneficially in consideration of the services provided.

The same principles applied to the award of costs of licensing justices and in the crown court. In both the court's needed information from the police as to whether the applicant for a licence was a fit person.

The police had a public duty, both under the 1964 Act and the Firearms Amendment Act 1997, in the public interest, to provide reliable information for the tribunal, whether justices or crown court.

It was in response to that duty that the police were respondents to the appeal and costs could not be awarded against them.

Witter appealed against the licensing justices' refusal to transfer her on-licence. The police, having objected to the transfer, became respondents to the appeal. The crown court allowed the appeal and awarded costs against the police.

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It was in response to that duty that the police were respondents to the appeal and costs could not be awarded against them.

His Lordship said that Mrs

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**SWIMMING**

# Top-ranked Palmer is passed over for award

By Craig Lord

PAUL PALMER will rise to his blocks for the start of the British short-course championships at Tollcross pool in Glasgow this morning apparently a forgotten man.

Although the 1997 European champion and 1996 Olympic silver medal-winner will once more end the year as Britain's highest-ranked swimmer in the world, he has been overlooked by national officials awarding the trophy designed to reward excellence. The Amateur Swimming Association's TM Yeoman Memorial Trophy is to go jointly to Susan Rolph and James Hickman, who both won titles for England at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in September and European short-course titles in Sheffield last week.

Rolph, coached by Ian Oliver at Newcastle, has set several Commonwealth records this year, while Hickman, who switched from Stockport to the City of Leeds club this year, has broken world short-course records in the 100 and 200 metres butterfly.

The winners of the trophy are chosen in a postal vote by a ten-person committee, chaired by Terry Denison, coach to the City of Leeds club, and approved by the ruling ASA committee of ten men. The vote took place before the European short-course titles.

While Rolph and Hickman have enjoyed superb seasons, rising to No 5 and No 6 in the world in their long-course events — the long-course factor equating to Olympic competition and therefore a critical measure of their worth — Palmer remains the only British swimmer ranked among the top three in the world.

Coached by Ian Turner at the University of Bath, Palmer was third in the 400 metres freestyle at the world championships in Australia in January behind the two men who

barred for world swimmer of the year honours, Ian Thorpe and Grant Hackett, both of Australia. Palmer was Britain's only individual medal-winner at the championships.

David Sparkes, the chief executive of the ASA, who votes on the trophy, said: "In many ways, this is a nice dilemma: the sport has for too long had one star who stands out. Now we have a number of swimmers who can lay claim to these subjective trophies."

Palmer, 24, said of the trophy: "I'm not really worried about this sort of award."

In January, he incurred the anger of swimming officials by suggesting that the National Lottery did not necessarily reward excellence and had a weighty means-testing element. Since Palmer's remarks, the English Sports Council has been working on changes to the allocation of funding.

Palmer returns to competition today, in the 200 metres freestyle, for the first time since he returned home from the Commonwealth Games before racing began. His weariness of swimming, was both physiological and psychological, though tests by British Olympic Association doctors have revealed no specific ailment.

"It had been a long haul training right through '97 and on to the worlds in January and I didn't take a real break after that," Palmer said. "By the spring, I just felt weary all the time — but I've been much better in training lately."

Palmer's aim in Glasgow is to qualify for the world short-course championships in Hong Kong in April. Some, such as Adam Whitehead, of Coventry, have already qualified.

The 18-year-old dived to the fifth-fastest time ever to win the 200 metres breaststroke title in Sheffield. Mark Foster will attempt the 50 metres butterfly world record.

# Daniels helps to lay foundations

**SARAH POTTER**



Daniels, distracted by events off the field, disappointed against Australia last summer

There is nothing like an Ashes series in Australia to keep our summer sport alive on cold winter days, even if England's latest effort has put the Christmas cheer on ice. With no sun-baked wickets to welcome or torment them, the nation's women cricketers have chosen this unseasonal time to announce their national development plan, *Laying the Foundations*.

It is the first official offering since the Women's Cricket Association (WCA) voted last March to dissolve itself — it was formed in 1927 — and pad up with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). The former executive director of the WCA, now the national manager for the women's game, is Barbara Daniels. Widespread, sustainable growth for female players and coaches, across all the counties, is her responsibility.

It is the ECB's financial and administrative backing that can make this possible. Nonetheless, upping straps to Lord's was not a lifeline grabbed enthusiastically by all WCA hands. The sex discrimination case, won by Theresa Harrild in March, threatened to yank the merger and topple some of the ECB's top order.

"I was very nervous about that vote," Daniels said. "I could stand up and say it wasn't about political correctness for the ECB, because I was meeting those people. The WCA members weren't and it was asking for a leap of faith."

Harrild's accusations (she claimed she was dismissed after being forced to terminate her pregnancy) continue to bounce around the offices of

the ECB, although Daniels is happy to duck them. "Working here has been a very positive experience," she said. "I have never felt any discrimination and part of the issue is about education — the men understanding the women's game and vice versa. I also think it's helped me that the men know I play a bit."

That is something of an understatement. As the England vice-captain, Daniels scored a fifty last summer only a short distance away from her

present office. Generally, though, her performances against Australia disappointed. "I struggled," she said. "Although I wasn't at work and the merger was going through, it was very difficult to split myself off from it — not to worry about the public perception of the game, what was happening, and just concentrate on playing."

As a result, Daniels has decided not to play next summer, when England host India for three one-day internationals

and a single Test match. "I've got to get away from cricket at some point," she said. "Just to keep a reasonable perspective and prevent paranoia. I'm not retiring, because I don't feel I'm as good as I could be and I didn't do myself justice against Australia. I've set my sights on the World Cup in 2000 in New Zealand, though I accept that does open the door for a youngster."

Ironically, it is Daniels, spearheading the game's development, who holds the key

'It's recognising that even small things can take us forward'

to just how good those youngsters might be. The plan is that the next generation will have a stronger base and be better prepared for international cricket. "The work that we're doing is saying very clearly that development has to be sustainable," she said.

*Laying the Foundations* is therefore aimed largely at existing county development officers. "They are the ones who know which men's clubs could introduce a women's team," Daniels said. "Their knowledge is a wonderful resource. Until we can introduce women development officers, it's recognising that even small things can take us forward."

The document is, then, a precursor to grander things. "Cricket's new Performance Plan comes out in January 2000," she said. "This is an attempt to move us in the right direction before then because women's cricket is not fully embedded in the ECB's present plan. In the next one, it will be."

The governing body's influence has spread already to the women's national team. Paul Farbrace has been named as the new coach to replace Megan Lear. "Meg's contract had expired and the job description changed," Daniels said. "I can say, hand on heart, that Meg left the team in a better state than she found it, but merges has given us the opportunity of getting one of the national coaches involved."

Farbrace, a former Middlesex and Kent wicketkeeper, remains responsible for the Eastern Region and England Under-15 boys' squad. "This has been added to his job," Daniels said. "One of the benefits is that when other men see people of his quality wanting to be involved, they realise women's cricket is not a Mickey Mouse outfit."

Following *The Wizard of Oz*, might offer the brightest route for English cricket, but at least *Laying the Foundations* is the start of an interesting journey for the disaffair side.

**BOXING**

# New York prepares for Lewis sell-out

By Sri Kumar Sen, Boxing Correspondent

LENNOX LEWIS'S bout with Evander Holyfield for the undisputed heavyweight championship of the world at Madison Square Garden, New York, on March 13, is heading for a sell-out, an executive at the venue said yesterday.

Ticket sales have so far outstripped all expectations. Within two weeks of announcing the bout at a press conference in New York, 11,000 seats have been sold and the Garden is confident that the remaining 8,000 will go very quickly in January.

Eric Gilford, the head of publicity at Madison Square Garden, said: "It is a fantastic start. This fight is our third big event in three years, after the Grammy's in 1997 and the NBA All-Stars game weekend this year. It looks like this one's going to be just as successful."

"There is a huge demand from Britain. They keep on asking for more and more tickets. When our publicity and that of Home Box Office (HBO), the cable television company kick in after the New Year, we are confident the fight will be a sell-out. It's a 'pick 'em' fight and people think Holyfield, being battle-hardened, will win. Also, the Ike Quartey-Oscar De La Hoya fight and Mike Tyson's return have put people in a boxing mood."

Lou Di Bella, the vice-president of HBO, was delighted that the box office at the Garden was doing well. "Yes, boxing is very hot at the moment," he said. "We've been putting millions into the publicity for the Lewis-Holyfield fight. Mike Tyson aside, this is the biggest event since the Holyfield-George Foreman fight in 1991. Good ticket sales at the venue bodes well for pay-per-view sales."

Around 7,000 British fans are expected to make the trip to New York. Panos Eliades, the head of Panix, the London promotion company, said that Panix had already sold 3,000 tickets. "We can sell as many as we can get hold of," Eliades said. "We've asked for more, but we don't know if the Garden will let us have them."

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**SHEEHAN on BRIDGE**

By Robert Sheehan, Bridge Correspondent

If after you bid a suit your right-hand opponent bids no-trumps, what to lead is a frequent dilemma. The disadvantage of trying your own suit is that it is what declarer will be expecting, and it may provide him with his ninth trick. On the other hand, if you try something else, it is possible that you may never be able to run your suit. This hand is from the 1997 Bermuda Bowl, held in Tunisia.

Dealer South	Love all	IMPs
♠ A J 10 9 4	♠ 8 6 5	♠ Q 7 2
♥ 7 3	♥ A 10 8 5	♥ K 7 3 2
♦ J 5	♦ J 8 5	♦ Q 10 9
	♦ A K 2	♦ 8 7
	♣ A K 3	
	♣ J	
	♣ A K 6 4 2	
	♣ Q 10 6 4 3	

Contract: Three No-Trumps by South. Lead: four of hearts.

(1) negative  
(2) asking for a spade stopper

Zia Mahmood was West, playing for the US. This is one of the situations I mention above. South is likely to hold the king of spades, and might well have bid no-trumps earlier if he had both king and queen.

Had Zia had a side ace, he would probably have led spades anyway, to set the suit up. But here, with his weak hand, he could see that it was quite likely his partner could get in to lead spades through. Leading a spade at trick one might give declarer his ninth trick. That was the case here: Zia's actual heart lead restricted declarer to eight tricks.

You can see Zia in action playing with Andrew Robson of Great Britain, at the 1997 Macallan International Bridge Pairs (held in association with *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*), which will be played at The White House Hotel, Albany Street, London NW1, London at the end of January.

Session times and prices: Wednesday January 20: 5.30 to 11pm £12.50; Thursday January 21: 12 noon to 4pm £12.50; 5.30 to 11pm £12.50; all day £20; Friday January 22: 1.30 to 7.00pm £17.50.

Season ticket for all sessions £35. Tickets are available from The Macallan Bow Office, 31 Queens Road, Mortlake, London SW14 8PH. Information: 0181-876 5841.

**KEENE on CHESS**

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

Kasparov in London

Today Garry Kasparov, the world champion, as part of his trip to London, launches the BT Wireplay service for games played off the Strand. I continue today with two further games from his blitz match against Kramnik.

White: Vladimir Kramnik  
Black: Garry Kasparov  
Blitz match, Moscow 1998

King's Indian Defence

1 Nf3 Nf6  
2 c4 g6  
3 Nc3 Bg7  
4 e4 d5  
5 d4 Q-O  
6 Bc2 Qc7  
7 O-O Nc6  
8 d5 Ne7  
9 b4 a5  
10 Bb3 ab4  
11 Bc4 Rf7  
12 ax4  
13 Ng5 Nc5  
14 Bc5 dxc5  
15 Bc3 Rg6  
16 a5 Rf8  
17 Ne6 Bb6  
18 Qd8 Rf8  
19 Qd8 Rf8  
20 Rb1 Rf8  
21 Nd5 Nc5  
22 cxd5 Bc7  
23 Bc2 Rf7  
24 a6 Bc6  
25 h4 Ng7  
26 Bc4 B6  
27 Bb5 N6  
28 N1 R8  
29 N2 R6  
30 R3 R8  
31 R3 R7  
32 N3 N5  
33 N4 N7  
34 B6 N8  
35 N5 N7  
36 B7 N8  
37 R1 N7  
38 g5 B3  
39 R1 R8  
40 R3 B5

Black resigns

**WINNING MOVE**

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Nimzowitsch - Nielsen, Simultaneous, Copenhagen, 1930. Can you spot White's clever winning combination?

**WORD-WATCHING**

By Philip Howard

PAREU  
a. A Tarot card  
b. A one-horse carriage  
c. A skirt

RAPIN  
a. A root crop  
b. An apprentice  
c. Five Brussels lace

ROSINER  
a. An under-gardener  
b. An Orthodox vestment  
c. A stiff drink

SCLAFF  
a. A Viking two-horned helmet  
b. A jazz riffle  
c. A bishop shot

Answers on page 42

**DUNWOOD**

RACING: YOUNG

12.30

1.00

1.10

1.40

RACING: YOUNG IRISH TRAINER FAVOURS KING GEORGE OPTION AT KEMPTON FOR FORMER GOLD CUP WINNER

# Dunwoody summoned for Imperial Call

By Chris McGrath

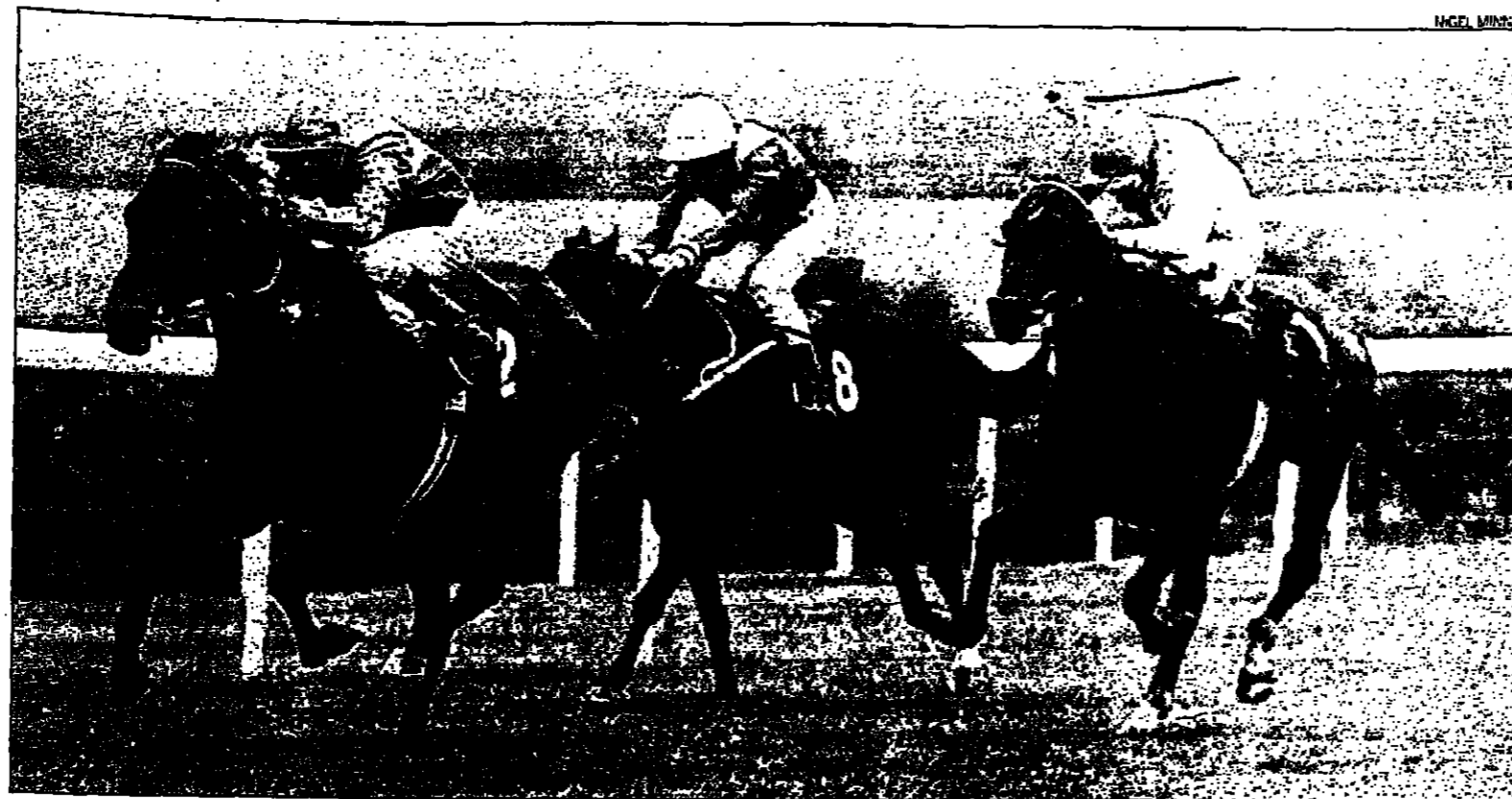
AN IMPERIAL summons is on its way to Richard Dunwoody, named yesterday as the ideal jockey to complete the rehabilitation of Imperial Call in the Pertemps King George VI Chase at Kempton on Boxing Day.

The 1996 Tote Cheltenham Gold Cup winner was ridden like an angel by Paul Carberry when retrieving all his old flair for impressive wins on his two latest starts. But Carberry, initially a substitute for the suspended Conor O'Dwyer and now confirmed as first choice, is required by Noel Meade at the Leopardstown Christmas meeting, while the luckless O'Dwyer will still be banned.

Carberry's faint hopes that Imperial Call might stay on home soil for the Ericsson Chase on December 28 rest on the ground drying right out at Kempton. As it stands, Raymond Hurley, the first-season trainer who has contributed to the general air of rejuvenation around the horse, yesterday indicated that he will be approaching Dunwoody.

The new partnership should increase the pressure on last year's winner. Sea More Business, with Tecton Mure and Imperial Call both likely to jump and travel with zest. Sea More Business will do well to get away with his usual propensity for one or two serious blunders.

Despite competition from the Ericsson Chase, Pertemps



Among Men winning last season's group one Sussex Stakes at Goodwood, which will be sponsored for the next three years by Lansons

is assured of another memorable King George. By contrast, Tim Warts, its chairman, gave the impression in September that he found the fourth year of his firm's sponsorship of the St. Leger an eminently forgettable experience. First, Sea Wave deprived the race of an extra touch of class when switched to the Prix de l'Arc de

Triomphe. Then Warts was incensed to see Muhtafel, the horse he leased for another race on Legey day, disqualified after passing the post first.

Yesterday's announcement that Pertemps has not renewed its sponsorship of the oldest classic should alarm not only on Doncaster, but which must now find a successor, but

also those with more general custody of Flat racing's heritage.

In the long term, commercial breeders' neglect of stamina in favour of speed threatens a less robust thoroughbred. Yet the racing public has seldom cherished stayers so dearly as in recent times, thanks notably to Double Trigger. Sponsorship is not the only way to preserve an heirloom such as the Leger.

As luck should have it, this blow was promptly cushioned by the news that the Sussex Stakes, run over a rather more modest distance, will be backed for the next three years by Champagne Lansons - and lavishly, too, with prize-

money, increased from £155,000 to £250,000. Having long supported the Vintage Stakes at the same meeting, the sponsor's expanded interest is a tribute to Goodwood.

The St Leger can draw inspiration from the Derby. After a period of deteriorating morale, the Derby is back in the pink and was recently assured

## RICHARD EVANS

Nap: SKIPCARL (1.40 Exeter)

Skipcarl won three Irish points prior to a promising second to Country House over hurdles at Warwick recently. He is entitled to go one better here.

NB: Wilmott's Fancy (2.30 Towcester)

of continuing support from Vodafone. This sense of renewed vigour was not diminished by news that the yearling stage for the millennium Derby has attracted 601 entries, up from 544 entered last year for the 1999 race.

Less glamorous, perhaps, but no less worthy an accomplishment than Derby success may be sought at Lingfield on Monday. For a record-breaking climax to a year of hard labour was followed by just a short head at Wolverhampton yesterday. Sifahfai denied his tenth Flat handicap success of the season by Pride Of Brixton in a photo-finish to the apprentices' sprint.

There remains one more chance, on Monday, for Sifahfai to claim for his own a twentieth century record that he shares at present with Champions Club, Glencroft, Vindaloo, Star Rage and, remarkably, Soaked, who led into the straight yesterday and could also have one last crack at the record.

## SPORT 39

### EQUESTRIANISM

#### Olympia draws powerful line-up

By Jenny MacArthur

RODRIGO PESSOA, who, in Rome in October, became the youngest rider to win the world showjumping championship - and the first Brazilian to head one of the most illustrious of the 27-year history of the Olympia championships, which begin in London today.

The five-day show, which combines a heady mix of serious showjumping and Christmas frivolity, hosts, on Saturday, the sixth World Cup qualifier of the season.

Simon Brooks-Ward, the director, has been besieged with requests for the 22 places for foreign riders. "I've had to turn away at least 30," he said. In addition to Pessoa, the field includes three members of the gold medal-winning German team in Rome - Ludwig Beerbaum, the winner of the Olympia qualifier last year, Lars Nieberg and Franke Sloothack. The Dutch are represented by Jos Lansink and Jan Tops, their two leading riders. The Irish have two formidable contenders in Trevor Coyle, who is leading the European League for the World Cup after winning both the Millstreet and Geneva qualifiers, and Peter Charles, who is riding Traxdata Carnavelle, the winner of the Berlin Grand Prix last month.

The British will have their work cut out to secure their share of the prize-money (boosted by a big sponsorship from Traxdata, the recording equipment manufacturer). £23,000 is on offer. Great Britain's 15-strong entry includes the four members of the bronze medal-winning team in Rome - John Whitaker, Nick Skelton, Geoff Billington and Di Lampard. Whitaker is resting Virtual Village Heyman, his team horse, and is relying on Grannusch and Welham, two veteran campaigners. He will decide tomorrow which to ride in the qualifier.

The other three team members all have a natural "first choice" for the big events this year. Skelton rides Hopes Are High, his Calgary Grand Prix winner, while Lampard has Silver Dream, on which she finished eleventh - the best British placing - at the world championships in Rome. Billington will ride his Calgary Grand Prix runner-up, Virtual Village It's Otto, a horse that, despite occasional refusals, is the one most likely to halt the foreign stamper this week.

The Ukrainian Cossacks and La Gardie Republique - the French equivalent of the Household Cavalry - are among the displays that will punctuate the showjumping events.

### HOCKEY

#### Giles back in fold for England

CALUM GILES has been recalled to the England senior squad that will be making preliminary preparations for the European Nations' Cup next year (Sydney Friskin writes).

Giles played in the World Cup in Holland seven months ago, but only as a substitute at short corners, in which capacity he scored six goals, and he was dropped from the Commonwealth Games in September because of a change in the law.

He then joined Southgate and his qualifiers in open play - he has scored eight goals in the National League - as has caught the attention of Barry Dancer, the national coach, who has included him in a squad of 21. Bob Crutchley, the Canock forward, who was at the Commonwealth Games but missed the World Cup, is also in the squad.

England tour Argentina in March and compete in the Champions' Trophy in Brisbane, Australia, in June, before the European Nations' Cup in September.

Dancer, who has also named a development squad of 17, said that both will be reviewed in May.

### Squad, page 41

### FIXTURES

FOOTBALL  
PONTIAC LEAGUE: Premier Division: Sunderland vs Manchester Utd (at Durnham City FC, 7.0).  
OTHER SPORT  
EQUESTRIANISM: Olympia International Championships (at Glasgow).

### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

#### Bangor

12.40 (2m) 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th, 101st, 102nd, 103rd, 104th, 105th, 106th, 107th, 108th, 109th, 110th, 111th, 112th, 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th, 121st, 122nd, 123rd, 124th, 125th, 126th, 127th, 128th, 129th, 130th, 131st, 132nd, 133rd, 134th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 139th, 140th, 141st, 142nd, 143rd, 144th, 145th, 146th, 147th, 148th, 149th, 150th, 151st, 152nd, 153rd, 154th, 155th, 156th, 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Sport's modern-day rulers failing to measure up

Keeping up has always been a problem for the ageing sportsman, but in the past seven days it is not the sportsmen but their leaders — the men who lord it over their creaking sporting bodies — who have been huffing and puffing and looking sadly out of date and off the pace.

The not-very-lamented resignation of Graham Kelly, the chief executive of the Football Association, and the vote of no confidence in Keith Wiseman, the chairman, over the so-called £3.2 million grants-for-votes scandal is just the latest in a series of crises that have found sports leadership looking shambolic.

Last week, Shane Warne and Mark Waugh, the Australia cricketers, who, for the past couple of years, have been at the centre of

charges that Salim Malik, the former Pakistani captain, attempted to bribe them, were revealed to have accepted payments themselves from an Indian bookmaker.

What was most shocking about this shabby episode was that the men at the top, on the Australian Cricket Board and the International Cricket Council, had tried to sweep the shameful dirt under the covers.

'The FA reeks of Victorian past'

Then, a few days ago, Marc Hodler, an 80-year-old Swiss lawyer, who, for 35 years, has been a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC),

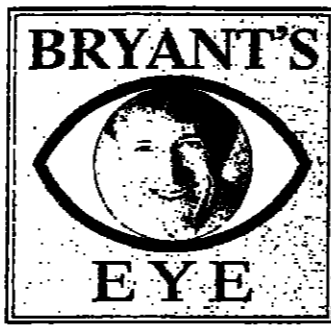
made allegations about pay-offs in the awarding of the Olympic Games to Atlanta and Nagano, Sydney and Salt Lake City. He threw around accusations that sums of money up to \$5 million had been involved and added that Juan Anto-

nio Samaranch, the IOC president, had attempted to gag him.

The common factor in the IOC scandal and the row that ousted Kelly is that both episodes involve allegations of sweeteners being used to help to bring great events to national venues. The effects of commerce on sport are all too brutally apparent when it comes to the fights for the Olympic Games or the World Cup.

There will be plenty who feel that Kelly and Wiseman have done nothing very wrong and certainly nothing more than their counterparts in the rest of the world would have done as routine. "After all," someone suggested, "if we are going to play football like Italians, why not behave like Italians?"

Kelly and Wiseman knew that world football's power-brokers were lining up South Africa for the prize of the 2006 World Cup finals. They believed that if they could cut a deal with the Welsh Football Asso-



ciation to get England a voice on the Fifa executive, it might help. In a world where this sort of tactic works, there are plenty within the FA itself who are determined that it should be modernised and turned into a force that can do battle with the money-men and television moguls who now dominate the game. Yet, like so much in British sport, there is still a huge element in the organisation of the FA that reeks of

its Victorian past. Lined up against the modernisers at Lancaster Gate are those who nostalgically yearn for men of the old school, men who have integrity seeping from the seams of their blazers — but at the same time they doubt whether such men are the leaders needed to steer sports' governing bodies into the next century. Too many of the men who rule over our games appear, to the Will Carlings of this world, as cold leftovers from sports' 19th-century childhood. It is as if all the sportsmen are now on steroids while their leaders try vainly to keep up on Oxo.

The problem with the governing bodies of sport, from the IOC with its Vatican-like certainties, to Lancaster Gate, with its musty smell of a museum, lies in their failure to keep pace with the commercial changes so greedily embraced by the sportsmen on the field and on the make.

Given their Victorian origins, it

was inevitable that the governing bodies of most sports would be voluntary and amateur, not commercial. Ruling agencies such as MCC, the Jockey Club, the Lawn Tennis Association and others were preservers of the upper class, with the belief that the conduct and values of sport were best left in the hands of benevolent paternalism.

The autocratic leaders of Lord's, St Andrews, Wimbledon and other sports may have been rigid and blinkered, but nobody would accuse them of being money-grabbers.

The world has overtaken them at an alarming rate and the size of the sports economy has never been larger than it is at the end of this century. A survey for the Sports Council eight years ago found that the value of "sport-related activity" stood at close to £39 bil-

lion and accounted for nearly half a million jobs — a sector similar in size to the postal and telecommunications industry and twice the size of agriculture, forestry and fishing. Such big business can no longer be run effectively by structures set up as the playthings of rich aristocrats. Yesterday, Tony Banks, the Minister for Sport, said: "I think a lot of governing bodies need to look at their structures to see how accountable they are, how professional they are, how modern they are."

The answer we have seen this week is that they are neither modern nor professional enough. The leaders of sport are going to have to learn to run a whole lot faster if they are going to keep up in the century to come.

JOHN BRYANT

Leaders looking sadly out of date

Candidates have chance to blow blast of fresh air through corridors of power at FA

Sheepshanks and Dein lead race to Lancaster Gate

BY MATT DICKINSON

KEITH WISEMAN could walk down Wembley Way on FA Cup Final day and not attract a second glance. The same will not be said of his eventual successor as chairman of the Football Association. Whether it is David Sheepshanks, the young (by FA standards) and thrusting chairman of Ipswich Town, or David Dein, the vice-chairman of Arsenal, the next leader of the FA will provide a high-profile, charismatic and pro-active face to the organisation. Everything, in other words, that the charmless and antiquated Wiseman was not.

In Sheepshanks, certainly, the FA has the chance to promote a man determined to drag the game into the next century. A millionaire courtesy of a family company that manufactures fish sauces, he is seen by many as the ideal candidate for riding Lancaster Gate of the smell of decay that pervades its committee rooms.

As chairman of the Football League, a position from which he stepped down in the summer, the 46-year-old proved to be a hugely successful battler on behalf of the country's neglected clubs. Sheepshanks was a significant force in safeguarding the UEFA Cup place for the Worthington Cup, a move that saved the competition from almost certain extinction.

er leagues would not slacken, even were his Ipswich side to win promotion to the FA Carling Premiership, and that belief in preserving the structure of the game, at a time when the top clubs are trampling over tradition in the stampede for riches, may win him widespread support. He is a moderniser with a hold on the game's heritage.

While Sheepshanks is favourite, he may face competition from Dein, who, because of his role on various UEFA committees, can count himself as England's most influential administrator. Dein has proved, with his running of Arsenal, that he is a far-sighted thinker and his opposition to the breakaway European Super League was a sign that he, too, has a feel for the broader interests of the game.

Both Sheepshanks and Dein may have to wait until

the summer to hear who is to succeed Wiseman, even though the present chairman is almost certain to be removed from his post on January 4. Geoff Thompson, the acting chairman, is likely to be asked to stay in the post until the scheduled elections at the end of the season, which could see election campaigns lasting several months. Thompson's associations with the county associations rather than the professional game are likely to cost him any chance of the chairmanship.

The likelihood of a delay in elections until the summer may also confuse the issue of who is to succeed Graham Kelly as chief executive, because the FA will be reluctant to appoint anyone to the post until the next chairman is known.

While there will be no shortage of those who would be willing to succeed Wiseman as non-paid senior councillor, candidates for the paid vacancy of chief executive appeared to be in a rush to distance themselves as quickly as possible from the speculation — and the £275,000 salary.

Rick Parry, who left the position of chief executive of the FA Premier League to take the same title at Liverpool, believes that it will be hard to attract a suitable candidate until the structure of the FA is shaken up. "It is time to have a look at the whole structure of the FA, to look at the decision-mak-



Sheepshanks, the Ipswich Town chairman, is seen as the ideal candidate to revive an antiquated organisation

ing powers of the various bodies, which has always been rather confusing," Parry said. "This situation will bring into much sharper focus the need to restructure the organisation and make it far more appropriate for the next millennium." It is unwieldy. The committee structure is labyrinthine. Certainly it is not sleek. It doesn't do things quickly. It is not a case of bringing in one person and expecting them to

perform miracles. "So would he be interested? I have my dream job, thank you," he said. Another to rule himself out was Greg Dyke, the chief executive of Pearson media group and a shareholder of Manchester United, who voiced similar misgivings at the prospect of dealing with the FA's ancient methods. "I can't think of a worse job, given the way the FA is currently structured and organised," Dyke said. "I

agree with David Mellor when he said that if ever there was an organisation where lots of men in blue blazers needed to fall on their swords, it is the FA."

That may leave the way open for Richard Scudamore, 39, the chief executive of the Football League, who joined with the Thomson Newspaper Group only this year. A qualified linesman, Scudamore's chances of switching

from the League to the Association will be considerably boosted if Sheepshanks is voted chairman.

That may have to wait, though, and, in the meantime, David Davies's sphere of influence will be growing at Lancaster Gate. Already appointed executive director, the head of public relations will not have helped his cause by assisting Glenn Hoddle to write his ill-advised World Cup diary.

Sampdoria prepare to hand reins to Platt

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

DAVID PLATT has been appointed to the coaching staff of Sampdoria and is expected to be confirmed as their coach, the Italian equivalent of a manager in the British game, tomorrow.

The 32-year-old former England captain flew to Italy last night and will be paraded at a news conference this morning at the club for which he played for two seasons between 1993 and 1995.

Platt said: "For several years, I have had a driving ambition to move into management, but I never thought for a moment that I might be fortunate enough to have the opportunity to start my career with one of the world's greatest clubs." The Serie A club, which is based in Genoa, confirmed that Platt had been appointed to the staff, but said that his full title would be announced at the news conference.

Liverpool hope to complete the signing of Thomas Helmer, the Bayern Munich and Germany defender, before the weekend. The club confirmed that negotiations were at a final stage, but it was unlikely that Helmer, 33, would be signed in time to play against Sheffield Wednesday on Saturday.

Carlisle United, the Nationwide League third division club, will name Nigel Pearson, the former Sheffield Wednesday and Manchester United defender, as their new

Italian prosecutors yesterday notified Antonio Matarrese, a UEFA vice-president, that he is being investigated in connection with an inquiry into the use of performance-enhancing substances in the Italian game. Matarrese is a former head of the Italian football federation.

manager today. The announcement will bring to a close the direct involvement of Michael Knighton, the chairman, in first-team affairs at Brunton Park.

Pearson's first task will be to announce the signing of Peter Beardsley, who is expected to rejoin the club where he began his career 19 years ago. Carlisle, relegated last May, have tumbled towards the foot of the league under the guidance of Knighton and David Wilkes and John Halpin, his coaches. Pearson has been searching for a suitable position since retiring as a player last summer and will be charged with reversing that slide. After being released by Fulham earlier this month, Beardsley, 37, met Knighton a week ago to discuss the possibility of a week-to-week contract with Carlisle.

Jonatan Johansson, the 23-year-old Rangers and Eintracht forward, is having a trial with Derby County as a prelude to a possible £1.5 million transfer. Charlton Athletic are giving a trial to Eric Wynalda, the United States forward, who spent last season with San Jose Clash in the United States and has appeared in the past three World Cup finals tournaments.

Diamonds give Cup third-round sparkle

IN AN FA Cup third round largely devoid of romance, with only three non-league clubs left in the competition, Rushden and Diamonds should take centre stage on January 2. Southampton might be playing Leyton Orient and Yeovil Town will travel to Cardiff City, but it is the visit of Leeds United to Nene Park that captures the essence of the competition.

Formed six years ago by the merger of Rushden Town and Irthlingborough Diamonds, Rushden had never previously gone beyond the first

round. They earned the right to take on opposition from the FA Carling Premiership with a 4-2 victory over Doncaster Rovers, their Football Conference rivals, in a second-round replay on Tuesday night.

For Brian Talbot, the Rushden manager, the memories are already flooding back. He appeared in the FA Cup Finals of 1978, 1979 and 1980, winning twice, and shared the experiences with David O'Leary, recently appointed manager of Leeds. In 1978, Talbot played in the Ipswich Town side that defeated Ar-

senal, who included O'Leary; in 1979, they were team-mates in the Arsenal side that overcame Manchester United; and, in 1980, they were losers against West Ham United.

"Our priority has got to be to get into the Football League, but what a great day it will be against Leeds," Talbot said. "Even if they beat us by four or five goals, with all their internationals, it will be no surprise and we can still enjoy the occasion." "If we play well and Leeds

play well, we'll get thrashed. If we play exceptionally well and they don't play well, then maybe we'll have a chance. Leeds presumably have hopes of winning the Cup, we don't, and David is a good lad who's doing a good job. We'll run around a lot on the way and see what happens."

Kingstonian, who are sixth in the Conference, two places behind Rushden, were unable to match their exploits, losing 2-1 in a replay against Orient, the Nationwide League third division club, at Brisbane Road. Gavin Holligan, scorer

of the Kingstonian goal, will now leave the Surrey side to join West Ham for a fee of £150,000.

Manchester City limped into the third round with Michael Brown scoring in extra time to see off the challenge of Darlington 1-0 at Maine Road. City now travel to Wimbledon in the new year. Oldham Athletic defeated Brentford 4-2 on penalties, after a 2-2 draw, to secure a tie against Chelsea at Boundary Park.

Revised draw, page 41



Talbot, left, and Max Griggs, the Rushden chairman, celebrate

South Africa achieves its goals

Rob Hughes reports on the changing face of football in a country where barriers are finally falling.

THE pulse quickened in Soweto and other townships yesterday in anticipation of the Nelson Mandela Inauguration Challenge match between South Africa and Egypt in Johannesburg.

However much South Africa humbles West Indies at cricket, whatever the pride in the Springbok rugby team, it remains football that liberates the sporting lives of the overwhelming majority of Africans. The match last night, which South Africa won 2-1, began the era of Trotti Moloto, their new coach.

"As a hard commercial businessman in my fifties, I thought I was beyond the emotions of football," Trevor Phillips, the Englishman who is just finishing his 2½-year role launching the South African Premier League, said. "But you can't escape what it means here. You get sucked into it. Black South Africans regard soccer as their province, their part of South Africa."

Joe Ndlela, Phillips's replacement, ran railways, ports and harbours. "It's time for a black chief executive," Phillips said. "I knew this was a short, tough assignment and Joe is a good administrator who will do the job everybody wants."

"Affirmative action," to promote indigenous South Africans into leading public roles is on the agenda in the country. A general election is months away — President Nelson Mandela, with his particular affinity to sport, will step down.

In the humble house in Soweto in which Mandela once lived, there remains a World Boxing Council boxing belt presented by Sugar Ray Leonard, the great world welterweight champion. In the neighbouring township of Orlando, four young players prepared for the "Mandela Challenge". Moloto faces a stiff task, giving

the high expectations of South Africans, but at least he does not face national rancour over the colour of a sportsman's skin. In what might be described as reverse discrimination, leaders of sport and politics are calling for the imposition of blacks on national teams. National Sports Council officials last week voiced shrill messages at the "lily-white" composition of South Africa's rugby and cricket sides. They were met by Lulu Xingwana, chair of the African National Congress (ANC) committee on sport, who said that the ruling party would legislate next year to impose black selection.

They follow Mandela's sentiment that progress is slow, but whereas Mandela is a patient man, his disciples divide sports with their threats. They believe that not enough has

happened in almost five years of Mandela's rule to erase more than 40 years of apartheid abuse in sport. If their thinking is that progress will win votes, they should heed the voice of the competitors. "I want to play because I deserve it, not because of the colour of my skin," Herschelle Gibbs, one of three young black cricketers on the fringe of the national squad, said. In the media, in the townships and from black and white, the sportsmen and sportswomen echo the thought: no tokenism, no reverse apartheid, no law to interfere what the struggle against racism finally won.

Advertisement for RUFGY UNION, featuring the text 'RUFGY UNION' and 'potent use for its defence'. There is also an advertisement for 'Moppy Higg' and other text from a sidebar.

RUGBY UNION

# RFU puts potent case for its defence

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

FOR the second time in seven months, the Rugby Football Union (RFU) will appear before a committee of the International Rugby Board (IRB) to explain how it, its leading clubs and the board have found divergent roads to follow. In Dublin today, however, the gloves may be off as Francis Baron, the new RFU chief executive, makes the acquaintance of the board for the first time.

Baron makes no pretence about the need for plain speaking. He will be joined by a legal representative to defend a charge that he believes should never have arisen and which has brought the RFU before the board's disciplinary committee for the first time. In May, the administration, then led by Peter Brook, the union president, and Cliff Brittle, chairman of the management board, sought to explain the terms of the Mayfair Agreement between the RFU and its clubs and both sides went away mollified.

Now, however, the IRB has drawn together a disciplinary panel chaired by Tim Gresson, of New Zealand, and comprising Shigeyuki Konno, of Japan, Syd Millar, of Ireland, Rian Oberholzer, of South Africa, and Alan Sharp, of Canada. This is an expensive operation for which the RFU, should it be found to have infringed board bylaws, may have to bear the cost, as well as any punishment that the board may deem fit.

The nub of the issue is the appeal made by England's leading clubs to the European Commission, seeking permission to conduct their own commercial and broadcasting agreements. The board, seeking to defend the primacy of international rugby, believes that the clubs should have been brought to heel by the RFU and is ag-

grieved that the union has not co-operated with the board in all respects.

"We find their arguments flimsy, the extreme," Baron said. "We're disappointed the IRB has chosen to go down this route and we have no alternative but to vigorously resist their disciplinary action. We believe there are no material grounds for the hearing."

Not that England alone are in the dock. A Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) delegation arrives in Dublin tomorrow to explain how Cardiff and Swansea have been able to break away from their jurisdiction this season and play a series of unauthorised games with English opponents, a charge that the RFU must also answer.

Neither union has any guarantee that the disciplinary hearing will provide an immediate decision; the board will arrive at a verdict within seven days, though one would have thought that the parties' respective legal representatives could have determined whether, under European law, the clubs were within their rights to act as they have. If, as the RFU contends, they are, then there is no case to answer. The home unions' working party on a British and Irish league continues its machinations. The working party, chaired by Glamour Griffiths, from the WRU, met at Heathrow yesterday and will assemble again next Wednesday.

Ulster will learn this morning whether they will be able to stage their European Cup semi-final against Stade Francais at Ravenhill, their home ground. Health and safety officials need to be satisfied with Ulster's plans to erect two temporary stands to increase capacity to 15,000, in line with European Rugby Cup Ltd requirements.



Flannery, the UCC hooker, struggles to escape a Barcelona tackle and the clutches of Pou, right, at Bristol yesterday. Photograph: Chris Ison

## Spanish students receive a lesson

University College Cork...76  
University of Barcelona...33

By MICHAEL AYLWIN

BRISTOL played the hosts as the first representatives of Catalan student rugby were welcomed to *The Times* Trophy yesterday, taking on University College Cork (UCC). It was a clash of the old world and the new, with the old, inevitably, imposing a comfortable supremacy.

UCC administered several seminars' worth of lessons in the finer arts of the game, but their opponents from the University of Barcelona proved to be enthusiastic students. Indeed, the Spaniards developed a sustained period of pressure in the Irishmen's territory towards the end of the match, which will give them heart when they take on Bristol, the group hosts, tomorrow.

As so often, however, their play eventually broke down in the face of the Irish tacklers and Darragh Moran, the long-striding UCC right wing, was sent clear to run the length of the field for his third try of the game. When Darragh Holt, his counterpart on the left, cantered home for his fourth a few minutes later, Ed Morrison, the referee, deemed

it a suitable point to terminate proceedings, perhaps a shade before time.

If comparisons in class between the two sides were unflattering to Barcelona, the Spaniards lacked nothing in heart and commitment. They are the perennial champions of Catalan student rugby and amongst the best in Spain. Spanish rugby is growing in popularity, with the national team's qualification for the World Cup, and this was reflected in Barcelona's ceaseless efforts, which earned the scant return of one penalty from Josep Pou.

It was unfortunate that Barcelona should have to meet a team like UCC for their initial



ing to European student rugby. The Irishmen are a class outfit and play their rugby in the second division of the AIB League. Holt and Moran are

## Durham given the push

THE first upset of *The Times* Trophy was registered in Rome, yesterday, when Harper Adams, an agricultural college in Shropshire, overturned the might of Durham University (Michael Aylwin writes). It was a stunning game that did justice to its no-nonsense setting, with three blistering pushover tries securing Harper Adams a 39-10 victory. With the sterling cries of a large travelling support still

ringing in his ears, Ian Robson, the Harper Adams coach, was overjoyed. "No one gave us a chance," he said, "but we have been working together for a week now and I knew we'd have it in us." Harper Adams drew 25-25 with Rome on Monday, so the group is still alive, but Robson expects Durham to beat Rome tomorrow.

In which case his team will progress to the next round at Exeter, who were thrashed

by University College Dublin on Monday, went out of the tournament after an equally debilitating 79-14 defeat at the hands of Toulouse, the favourites.

The University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, finalists last year, beat Dundee 48-9, but can be saved only in the most unlikely event of the Scots beating Loughborough tomorrow in a group sure to be topped by Northumbria.

by University College Dublin on Monday, went out of the tournament after an equally debilitating 79-14 defeat at the hands of Toulouse, the favourites.

formidable athletes. Holt is one of a myriad of UCC players in the Ireland Under-19 team recently crowned world champions.

UCC semi-finalists in this tournament a year ago, have been the best university team in Ireland in recent years, although University College Dublin beat them by a point earlier this season, and they provided 12 players to the Irish Universities squad that scored 80 points against their English equivalents last season.

UCC now progress through to the quarter-final of *The Times* Trophy, having triumphed 23-14 over Bristol on Monday night. In a highly competitive game, Holt, once again, ran the length of the field early in the second half, after a Bristol error, which broke the back of the hosts' challenge. Yet UCC were without Mick O'Driscoll, their imposing second-row forward, and Peter Stringer, their cheeky scrum half, who were both on European Cup duty with Munster over the weekend, but who enjoyed themselves immensely against Barcelona.

Bristol may go through as best runners-up, but, for the moment the plaudits go to the Irishmen and the hand of encouragement to the Spaniards. All three squads came together in the evening for a celebratory dinner, which was attended by such luminaries as Morrison, Bob Dwyer and Kieran Bracken. **SCORERS:** UCC: Tries: Holt 4 (6 min, 31, 52, 75), O'Mahony 1 (10), Moran 3 (15, 16, 70), Hooley 2 (29, 57), Flannery 2 (45, 52), Conners (15), O'Mahony 6 Barcelona: Tries: G. Hooley (10), P. O'Driscoll (10), J. Hooley (10), J. Hooley (10), J. Hooley (10), J. Hooley (10). **BARCELONA:** D. Ledesma, J. Aragony, A. Torres (15), I. Dumas (20), M. Riera, E. Casas, J. Pou, O. Garcia (15), R. Salazar (10), O. Arenal, B. Casanova, J. Castellet (10), J. Arenal, 50, M. Zapata (10), A. Chelva (5), A. Barral, B. Cabada, D. Lopez, J. Boal (10). **REFEREE:** E. Morrison (Bristol)

## SPORT IN BRIEF

### Mitchell cleared of drugs violation

ATHLETICS: Dennis Mitchell, of the United States, did not commit a doping violation, a three-member panel of the USA Track and Field Doping Hearing Board has unanimously agreed. The decision, which was announced after a two-day hearing in Chicago, clears Mitchell for competition in the United States. However, he must also be cleared by the International Track and Field Federation, the world governing body, to be able to compete outside the United States. Mitchell said: "I had faith all along that I was going to be exonerated." He was suspended by the International Amateur Athletic Federation in July after it concluded that Mitchell's urine sample from an out-of-competition test in April had high testosterone and epitestosterone levels.

ROWING: The Henley Stewards announced yesterday that the 1998 Royal Regatta showed an income growth of 596,610 (5.6 per cent) and a pre-tax profit of more than £250,000. Henley will, over the next four years, commit £190,000 to Project Oarsome, a scheme aiming to bring rowing into new schools and communities. Steve Redgrave was elected to Henley's committee of management yesterday.

CYCLING: Matthew Stephens, the British road race champion, will lead the Harrold's team for the 1999 season. He will be joined by Gordon McCauley, the New Zealand road champion, Mark McKay, Joe Bayfield and Julian Ramsbottom. Further signings are expected this month.

BOXING: Paul Lloyd, the European bantamweight champion, has been ordered to make a mandatory defence of his title against Johnny Bredahl, of Denmark. Lloyd, of Ellesmere Port, won the vacant title in Chester on Saturday with a twelfth-round stoppage of Louis Mancini, of France.

## SNOOKER: WORLD NO 1 BLAMES LACK OF PRACTICE FOR LATEST PREMATURE EXIT

# Sloppy Higgins toppled by Lee

FROM PHIL YATES IN DUBLIN

JOHN HIGGINS cited an inability to follow a set practice routine as the underlying reason for his miserable record in recent weeks after a 5-3 defeat by Stephen Lee in the second round of the Irish Open here yesterday.

Since Higgins, the world No 1, triumphed at the United Kingdom championship last month, he has also lost his opening match at the Malta Grand Prix — to Alex Borg, a part-time telecommunications worker — and in the German Masters, to John Parrott.

"I need to practise for at least four or five hours a day and you simply can't do that on the road," Higgins said, after undoubtedly the finest year of his career ended on a low note. "With hindsight, I shouldn't have gone to Malta. It was crumming too much in."

Lee, the world No 9, is buoyant these days after his capture of the Grand Prix title in October, but he was not required to perform to an especially high standard in order to get the better of Higgins for the first time in six meetings. "I was quite surprised that John missed so many. He usually doesn't make a mistake against me," Lee, who capitalised on this uncharacteristic vulnerability with runs of 43, 94, 53 and 49, said. He goes forward to play John Parrott in the quarter-finals.

Parrott, who admits to feeling jaded after travelling direct to the Republic from winning the German Masters in Bingen on Sunday, again relied on bloody-minded resolve to advance after his 5-4 win

over Dominic Dale in the first round on Tuesday. The Liverpoolian trailed Matthew Couch, the world No 78, 4-2 before drawing level at 4-4, with breaks of 61 and 55. Leading 44-31 in the deciding frame, Couch missed a tricky red to a balk pocket that allowed Parrott to fashion a 31 clearance to pink.

"I am having a nice easy time here, aren't I?" Parrott said. "I haven't played anywhere near as well as I did in Germany, but I couldn't be any more determined and that's the only thing that's carrying me through."

Ken Doherty, who always relishes playing in front of his fellow countrymen, highlighted a 5-2 victory over Bradley Jones with a 109 break in the first frame, but Mark Wil-

liams, runner-up to Parrott on the banks of the Rhine last week, produced the day's outstanding performance. Williams gave himself an excellent opportunity to secure the event's £3,000 highest-break award with a 130 total clearance during a 5-0 whitewash of Graeme Dott, which took only 77 minutes to reach its conclusion.

For the second year in succession, Jimmy White, darling of the crowd at Wembley Conference Centre, has been awarded the sponsors' discretionary wild card invitation to the Benson & Hedges Masters in February.

RESULTS: First round: S Lee (eng) 6-0 O'Hara (scot), M Taylor (hvs) 5-2 G. Hooley (ire) 5-1, J Higgins (scot) 5-1, J. White (eng) 5-2, J. White (eng) 5-2, P. Doherty (ire) 5-2, D. Jones (eng) 5-2, J. Parrott (eng) 5-1 M. Couch (eng) 5-4.

## FOR THE RECORD

**BASKETBALL**  
NBA: Detroit 109, Charlotte 96; Cleveland 100, Philadelphia 96.  
**CRICKET**  
DUBLIN: South Africa 205, Ireland 129 (20 overs); Ireland 122 (20 overs), D B O'Connell 56; West Indies won by eight wickets.  
**FOOTBALL**  
Tuesday's late night games:  
FA CUP: Second round: 2. Arsenal 2-0 Tottenham, 3. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 4. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 5. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 6. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 7. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 8. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 9. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 10. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 11. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 12. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 13. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 14. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 15. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 16. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 17. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 18. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 19. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 20. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 21. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 22. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 23. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 24. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 25. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 26. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 27. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 28. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 29. Manchester City 1-0 Liverpool, 30. 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Deflated England must start looking to the next generation

Time to build for Tudor period

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN CANBERRA

THEY left Adelaide in a state of helpless purgatory, always something there to remind them. Newspaper headlines sneered. Test match highlights dominated the airline video screens and television cameras probed mercilessly on arrival in Canberra.

England's cricketers are finding it hard to walk tall in a country that seeks only to mock. The fulfilment of another abortive Ashes mission was plain on their faces and in their silent introspection.

Gooch acknowledged the condescension now rife here. "In the games left to us, we have to show the people of Australia that we can play the game. They like winners over here and, if you keep losing, they tend to give you a funny look all the time."

I am certainly in favour of change, because the old system wasn't working. The overall thing is that our counties must be better-run and only the best players should play county cricket.

twice on tour, without conspicuous encouragement, but the No 7 position that he covets has had no convincing claims from elsewhere. Surely, we know everything necessary about John Crawley and Dominic Cork; it is time to discover if Holfioake can perform at the highest level.

Taylor's team deserves acclaim

JOHN WOODCOCK



England's cricketers would have difficulty retaining their self-respect if they read the newspapers here yesterday and that would make things even more dire than they are already.



Taylor, centre, the Australia captain, joins Ian Healy, left, and Steve Waugh in celebrating the team's Ashes triumph

lot to do with it, no doubt; but so does common-or-garden competence. Hard, closely-knit and thoroughly professional, Mark Taylor's side is entitled to be ranked now as one of Australia's most proficient since the Second World War.

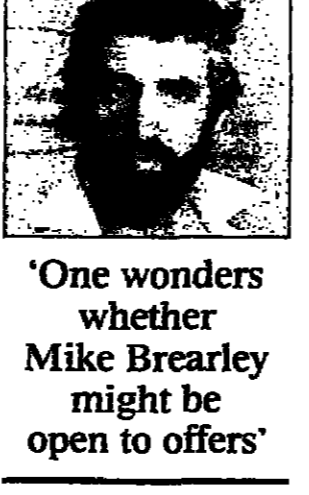
put them not far behind the 1948 side of Don Bradman in England and the Ian Chappell side of the mid-1970s, when Lillee and Thomson were fit and in harness together.

Tuesday was, in fact, a fine piece of batting. Yet to lament one's luck is almost always the fate of the weaker, stronger sides make their own luck.

because of the covering regulations, those, sadly, are things of the past. After the match had ended on Tuesday, Stewart offered no excuses. Rather, he apologised.

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Playing as they did in Australia, against England in 1974-75 and West Indies in 1975-76, Chappell's commandos were also truly formidable. Lillee and Thomson were endowed with an aura of aggressive confidence.



'One wonders whether Mike Brearley might be open to offers'

For all kinds of reasons, England could never do that. In the past 35 years, we have produced only two fast bowlers who have been consistently effective at the highest level.

In seeking a solution to their problems, England need to start by unwinding a little and re-learning a lot. The batsmen avoid footwork and the bowlers avoid bowling. I wonder whether Mike Brearley might be open to offers to get the show back on the road.

Such is the depth of cricketing talent in Australia at the moment, particularly in batting, that it is questionable whether more than one or two of Alec Stewart's side would get into a combined Anglo-Australian touring party of 17 players.

WORD-WATCHING. Answers from page 38. PARU: (a) A skirt worn by men and women in Polynesia, made of a single straight piece of cloth, usually of printed cotton.

TELEVISION CHOICE

Their beautiful laundrette

Personal Services: Brief Encounters Channel 4, 8.30pm. Posh Wash, a laundrette in South Shields, is the focus for this final programme in this diverting series about service providers.



The last of the series of dinnerladies with Victoria Wood and co. (BBC1, 9.30pm)

Picking Up the Pieces ITV, 9.00pm. Given that paramedics in one programme or another are hardly off the television screen, a drama about them was not the most original of ideas.

Science at War: Full Spectrum Dominance BBC2, 9.25pm. Full spectrum dominance is not a phrase from Dr Strangelove but Pentagon-speak for the belief among the American military that it has the technology to win any war anywhere in the world.

dinnerladies BBC1, 9.30pm. Victoria Wood's factory canteen sitcom ends its series much as it started, with lots of clever lines but not enough to glue them together.

Science at War: Full Spectrum Dominance BBC2, 9.25pm. Full spectrum dominance is not a phrase from Dr Strangelove but Pentagon-speak for the belief among the American military that it has the technology to win any war anywhere in the world.

RADIO CHOICE

Sound Stories Radio 3, 11.00am. There are those among the Radio 3 purists who regard Sound Stories as one of the signs that the network is going to hell in a handcart.

Crossing Continents Radio 4, 11.00am. This is another programme that has had its critics, notably for adopting a magazine format approach to foreign affairs.

RADIO 1 (BBC) 6.00am Zoe Ball 9.00 Simon Mayo's Office Party 12.00 Kevin Greening. Includes 12.30 Newsbeat 2.00pm Mark Radcliffe.

BBC WORLD SERVICE 5.00am The World Today 7.00 News 7.15 Off the Shelf Back 7.30 Composer of the Month 8.00 News 8.10 Focus.

RADIO 2 (BBC) 6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 9.30 Ken Bruce 12.00 Jimmy Young 2.00pm Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 David Alan 8.00 Paul Jones 8.00 The A1 Road.

CLASSIC FM 6.00am Nick Bailey's Easter Breakfast. A selection of rousing music to start the day 8.00 John Kelly. The Hall of Fame Hour.

RADIO 5 LIVE (BBC) 5.00am Morning Reporters 6.00 Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire 9.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00.

RADIO 3 6.00am On Air with Patrick Trawley. Includes a review of the Royal Shakespeare Company's new production of The Winter's Tale.

VIRGIN 6.30am Cms Evans 9.30 Russ Williams 1.00pm Nick Abbot 4.00am Janet 6.45 Mark Forest 10.00am Janey Lee Grace 1.00pm James Menti 4.30 Jeremy Clark.

RADIO 4 5.30am World News 5.35 Shipping Forecast 5.40 Inshore Forecast 5.45 Prayer for the Day 5.47 The World at One Nicky Campbell.

TALK RADIO 6.00am Ed Overton & Clare Corford 9.00 Scott Chesford 12.00pm Lorena Crook 2.00pm Janet Raftery 4.00 Peter Dooly 5.00 The Sports Zone 8.00 James Whale 1.00pm Ian Collins.

RADIO 5 6.00am Morning Reporters 6.00 Breakfast with Julian Worricker and Victoria Derbyshire 9.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00.

Watches of Switzerland. Neutral about most things, cuckoo about watches. For your Watches of Switzerland Rolex shop phone 071 931 7171

Moth. A large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, partially cut off. It features the word 'Moth' in a large, stylized font at the top and contains various smaller text and graphics below.

# Mother, you'll like this, but not a lot

The period setting of Catherine Cookson's *Colour Blind* (ITV), in which young Bridget McQueen brings her new black husband home to meet her Irish Catholic family in 1915 South Shields — the sort of people who believe that every black is just as worthy a human being as any other black; that is, about as worthy as earwax — is either a clever way of bringing home to us that such prejudice is still rife today without rubbing our noses in it; or it was necessitated by the fact that such racism just doesn't exist any more (except in a few places like America, Europe, Asia and the Metropolitan Police).

Maybe it really doesn't happen any more. Perhaps today's Spike Tracys and Katharine Hepburns don't quiver when their daughter brings Sidney Pottier home. So what, then, would be the modern-day equivalent?

"Mum, I've just got married!"

"That's wonderful, darling. So where's your new husband?"

"Mum, I ought to warn you that you might be shocked when you see him."

"Don't worry dear, it makes no difference to me what his creed or colour is. As long as you love him, that's fine by me. So who is he? Will Smith? Samuel L. Jackson?"

"Mum, I've married Paul Daniels ... Mum? MUM! Someone call an ambulance, her pulse has stopped!"

It's when you see the rest of Bridget's dysfunctional family that you realise what propelled her — in spite of the torment she knew she would face — to marry a man from Sierra Leone. Nature wanted to broaden the gene pool to give Bridget the best chances of avoiding the McQueen family traits. It decided that finding someone suitable in England, let alone Tyneside, would not have been drastic enough, which is why

Nature put Bridget (Niamh Cusack) together with James Pearson, an African merchant seaman (Tony Amaratunga). This genetic engineering worked like a treat. Their daughter, Rose Angela, turns out to be a sweet and intelligent human being, unlike the members of her mother's family — particularly her unhelpful Uncle Matt, who goes through a range of ugly snarls as though he's trying them out in the shop and hasn't yet decided which one to pay for.

The plot is pretty much painting-by-numbers, but Cookson is always careful to choose an arresting picture and to then paint neatly between the lines. The end result is never a mess, even if you wouldn't rush to hang it in the Tate. The acting is sharp, the evocation of 1915 Tyneside well done and Gordon Hann's screenplay is crisp. Now for the big surprise — nothing goes

**REVIEW**



Joe Joseph

smoothly for Bridget. James and Rose Angela. By the end of this opening episode, James has had to flee South Shields to avoid being lynched. Two more episodes to come, ending, no doubt, happily — but not necessarily predictably — because, of course, "happily" means different things to different members of the McQueen clan. Powerful family bonds were also the focus of *The Problems of*

*Parenthood*, last night's episode of *The Life of Birds* (BBC1), in which we saw a mummy and daddy coo lovingly tending their nine coot eggs and then diligently feeding the hatched coot chicks until the day finally arrived for the mummy and daddy coo — like generations of coot parents before them — to gaze upon their offspring and realise they were fed up with feeding for helpless chicks. So they pecked them on the head until they were too scared to squawk for more food and starved to death, thereby leaving just enough finches to fill an avian family Volvo.

The photography, as throughout this series, was breathtaking. The opening scene was of a pelican chick cracking its way out of its shell, and just watching that enormous beak poking through the first hole was enough to give you new respect for Nature as well as a sense of what must have been going through the mind of Jimmy

Durante's mother when she caught the first glimpse of her baby emerging, nose first.

As part from a few instances of do-or-die callousness, it was clear that birds treat their chicks pretty well — occasionally abandoning them for reasons of survival, but rarely abusing them, or spanking them, or losing their temper with them for leaving bits of Lego all over the nest. To make sure that finches — who build their nests in dark tree hollows — can discharge their parental duty of feeding their chicks in the traditional mouth-to-mouth manner, finch chicks have a blinding array of luminous nodules around their beaks, along with yellow-beak markings and colourfully-striped tongues, which act like airstrip landing lights to their parents who have just arrived home with lunch. This is a considerably more fetching "Feed Me"

signal than the human equivalent in which children sit in the back seat of the car squealing every time they see a McDonald's sign.

Martin Jacques's film, *Proud to be Chinese* (BBC2), achieved what any documentary maker would be thrilled to have managed — a legitimate excuse to travel to almost every country in the world.

But along the way Jacques has pieced together a remarkable collage of the Chinese diaspora and of its swelling financial, intellectual and cultural muscle. Chinese are Britain's highest earners. They dominate the smarer end of American universities. Many Australian children now study Mandarin and dream of one day working in Shanghai. With China only just beginning to flaunt its economic potential, Jacques's film may have captured the moment when the West realises that what it long thought was an ugly duckling is fast turning into a swan.

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (14948)
  - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (T) (84123)
  - 8.00am *Mirry* (T) (5355272)
  - 9.45 *Style Challenge* (1011524)
  - 10.05 *City Hospital* (T) (7887901)
  - 10.55 *News* Regional News: Weather (T) (4529272)
  - 11.00 *Good Living* with Jane Asher (4548948)
  - 11.25 *Can't Cook, Won't Cook* (T) (4549036)
  - 11.55 *News* Regional News: Weather (T) (454185)
  - 12.00 *Pass the Buck* (9143746)
  - 12.25pm *Going for Gold* (T) (9122253)
  - 12.50 *The Weather Show* (T) (7989475)
  - 1.00 *One O'Clock News*: Weather (T) (5482)
  - 1.30 *Regional News*: Weather (4620194)
  - 1.40 *Neighbours* Lily refuses to forgive Karl (T) (9730036)
  - 2.05 *Inside* A reformed law-breaker does one last deal for the sake of his son. With Raymond Burr (T) (7804384)
  - 2.55 *Battered Dogs* Home Reuniting strays with their owners (459482)
  - 3.25 *Children's BBC*: Playdays (906325)
  - 3.45 *Firman Sam* (8254562) 3.55 *Picnics* (336001) 4.20 *Mr. Wynn* (1142494) 4.35 *Smart* (955893) 5.00 *News* and (2263611) 5.10 *Aquila* (906727)
  - 5.35 *Neighbours* (T) (T) (277036)
  - 6.00 *Six O'Clock News*: Weather (T) (466)
  - 6.30 *Regional News Magazine* (955)
  - 7.00 *Watchdog* with Anna Robinson Consumer investigation show, putting some of the biggest names on the night street under the spotlight (T) (9678)
  - 7.30 *EastEnders* Sparks fly between Phil and Fran (T) (920)
  - 8.00 *Ant and Dec* Shania Lynne checks up on the rats and mice of the London Dungeons, and is introduced to Bradon's police horses, while a c-diffie impales himself on iron railings (T) (9068)
  - 8.30 *2point4 Children* Bill toothily asks Ben to do the Christmas food shopping — but he has his own plans for providing a rather unconvincing dinner. Comedy starring Brenda Long and Gary Olsen (T) (7833)
  - 9.00 *Nine O'Clock News*: Regional News: Weather (T) (3123)
  - 9.30 *CBC16* *diminutives* — *Morde* plummet to its lowest ebb: with Dolly and Jean staging a walk-out, leaving Sam to single-handily fly the night shift. Last in series (T) (78255)
  - 10.00 *They Think It's All Over With Julian Clary* (T) (2098)
  - 10.30 *Clive Anderson All Talk* With Frank Skinner and Björk. Last in series (41746)
  - 11.00 *Question Time* Topic debate with panelists including Mo Mowlam, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Kenneth Clarke MP (T) (77032)
  - 12.05pm *Great Northfield Minnesota Raid* (1971) Western adventure, following members of the Cole Younger-Jesse James gang as they plan and execute a daring bank robbery. Starring Robert Duvall. Directed by Philip Kaufman (T) (7120783)
  - 1.30 *State Top Desk* (72104)
  - 1.35 *BBC News 24* (10082012)

- BBC2**
- 7.00am *Children's BBC Breakfast Show*: The Adventures of the Garden Fairies (6193001) 7.05 *Teletubbies* (6194543) 7.30 *Yogi's Treasure Hunt* (906123)
  - 7.55 *Blue Planet* (1019107) 8.20 *Funny Phunton* (4007291) 8.45 *Footie: Football Bird* (8235253) 8.55 *Tales of the Tooth Fairies* (8935340) 9.00 *The Adventures of the Garden Fairies* (4467901) 9.05 *The Phil Silvers Show* (7946368) 9.30 *Great Romances of the 20th Century* (89488)
  - 10.00 *Teletubbies* (30814) 10.20 *FLM: Forty-Ninth Parallel* (78337) 12.30pm *Working Lunch* (83765) 1.00 *Fiddley Foodie Bird* (1649484)
  - 1.10 *The Arts and Crafts Hour* Making a doll's house (5681140)
  - 2.10 *Match of the Day Greats* (88195104)
  - 2.40 *News*: Weather (T) (8068185)
  - 2.45 *Westminster* with Diana Maddix Parliamentary news (T) (2679456)
  - 3.25 *News*: Weather (T) (8049036)
  - 3.30 *Gardeners' World* Creating the perfect lawn (28300) (T) (814)
  - 4.00 *Change That!* (T) (8016746)
  - 4.25 *Ready, Steady, Cook!* (T) (8019833)
  - 4.55 *Lowrd* (T) (7881058)
  - 5.30 *Today's* (T) (185)
  - 6.00 *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* An away team come under attack (T) (868263)
  - 6.45 *Sides* Maggie and Wade evade a gang of drug-runners (T) (806901)
  - 7.30 *First Sight* Nicky Campbell offers his 'selfie' guide to avoiding the streets of Christmas shopping (T) (552)
  - 8.00 *Beat Route* Blues and belly dancing in the Lebanese capital of Beirut (T) (8340)
  - 8.30 *Top Gear* The show announces the winner of its prestigious Car of the Year award (T) (6475)

- BBC3**
- 5.30am *ITN Morning News* (11340)
  - 6.00 *GMTV* (123833)
  - 9.25 *Trisha* (T) (9254524)
  - 10.15 *This Morning* (T) (329592)
  - 12.15pm *ITV News and Weather* (T) (339611)
  - 12.30 *ITN Lunchtime News*: Weather (T) (7291)
  - 1.00 *Shortland Street* (8507123)
  - 1.35 *Home and Away* Dana catches Sam and Hayley kissing (T) (9288291)
  - 2.00 *Confessions* Home in the Country Alison Cork presents creative ideas for the festive season (915) (5158814)
  - 2.45 *Supermarket Sweep* (T) (714630)
  - 3.15 *ITN News*: Weather (T) (8841678)
  - 3.20 *ITV News* (T) (8831291)
  - 3.25 *CTV*: Wizzador (8821814) 3.35 *Kipper* (8249630) 3.55 *Cow and Chicken* (3371017) 4.15 *Hay Arnold* (7292122) 4.40 *The Worst Witch* (1742949)
  - 5.10 *A Country Practice* Tom's past comes back to haunt him (8716878)
  - 5.35 *ITV Crimemasters* (268272)
  - 5.40 *ITN Early Evening News*: Weather (T) (143830)
  - 6.00 *Home and Away* (T) (553389)
  - 6.25 *WALES*: Wales Tonight; Weather (T) (767291)
  - 6.25 *WEST*: ITV Weather (187475)
  - 6.30 *The West Tonight* (T) (104)
  - 7.00 *Emmentale* Mandy learns the truth about Burch (T) (4746)
  - 7.30 *Who Can Work It Out* (388)
  - 8.00 *The 501* A woman on the books of a dating agency is found dead (T) (4340)

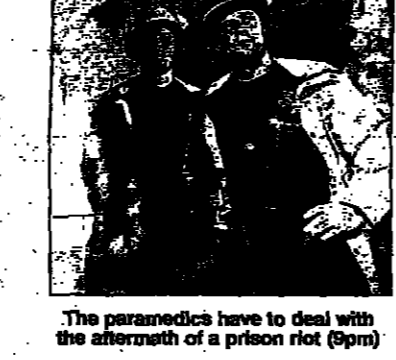
- CELEBRITY**
- As *ITV West* except 12.15pm-12.30 *Central News*: Weather (T) (8805475) 1.00 *Echo Point* (88678) 7.30 *Christmas Home in the Country* (919) (829475) 2.15-2.45 *Home and Away* (T) (801291) 3.20-3.25 *Central News*: Weather (T) (801291) 5.10-5.40 *Shortland Street* (8716878) 6.25-6.55 *Central News*: Weather (T) (551288) 6.55-7.00 *Lifeline* (T) (516123) 10.10-10.40 *Central News*: Weather (T) (813017) 10.40-12.40 *FILM: Best Friends* (56284524) 1.40pm *Pirate TV* (T) (963216): 2.05 *Not Fade Away* (221215) 2.30 *Box Office America* (T) (4966470) 3.30 *The Heart of the Matter* (T) (8992266) 3.35 *Reflections* (5807378) 4.20 *Central Jobfinder '98* (T) (3334447) 5.20-5.30 *Asian Eye* (2157838)
- WESTCOUNTRY**
- As *ITV West* except 12.15pm-12.27 *Westcountry News*: Weather (T) (859811) 12.27-12.30 *Christmas Stories* (8813494) 1.00 *Emmentale* (T) (80678) 1.30 *Christmas Home in the Country* (919) (829475) 2.15-2.45 *Home and Away* (T) (801291) 3.20-3.25 *Central News*: Weather (T) (881291) 5.08 *Birthday People* (831908) 5.10-5.40 *Home and Away* (T) (8716878) 6.00-7.00 *Westcountry Live* (T) (50882) 6.55-7.00 *Westcountry News*: Weather (T) (804369) 10.45-12.40 *FILM: Psycho IV: The Beginning* (6177814)
- ANGLES**
- As *ITV West* except 12.15pm-12.30 *Meridian News*: Weather (559611) 5.10-5.40 *Home and Away* (T) (801291) 6.00 *Meridian Tonight* (T) (524) 6.30-7.00 *Central Rides* (919) (104) 10.20 *Meridian News*: Weather (T) (804369) 10.45-12.40 *FILM: Georgy Girl* (8176814) 5.05am-5.30 *FreeScreen* (T) (7115788)
- ANGLIA AIR WATCH**
- As *ITV West* except 12.15pm *Anglia Air Watch* (888492) 12.20-12.30 *Anglia News and Weather* (8805475) 1.00-1.35 *Disasters* (T) (807123) 2.10-5.40 *Shortland Street* 6.23 *Anglia Weather* (88104) 6.25 *Anglia News* (T) (88104) 6.55-7.00 *What's On* (516123) 7.00 *Anglia Air Watch* (813478) 7.00-8.30 *Anglia News and Weather* (T) (813017) 10.40 *Ray Davies: Visions of England* (327889) 11.20 *Anatomy of Disaster* (210456) 12.15am-12.40 *Tales from the Darkside* (T) (8270470)
- STARTS**
- 5.55am *Sesame Street* (T) (4385620) 7.00 *The Big Breakfast* (4612659) 9.00 *The Comedy Show* (T) (2376736) 9.35 *FILM: That Lady* (T) (810414) 11.30 *Powerhouse* (T) (482125) 12.00pm *Judge Joe Brown* (4640782) 12.30 *Sesame Street* (4385620) 1.00 *Planned Parenthood* (64121746) 1.00 *Migmas* (T) (6959017) 1.15 *Pingu* (T) (6994272) 1.30 *FILM: The Silence* (T) (10581920) 3.30 *Collectors' Lot* (T) (1136643) 4.00 *Fifteen-to-One: The Big Winner* (T) (11365678) 4.30 *Ricki Lake* (T) (1137462) 5.10 *Planned Parenthood* (64121746) 5.30 *Countdown* (T) (11365610) 6.00 *Newyddion* (T) (1986678) 6.10 *Heno* (T) (8069533) 7.00 *Robylyr Cwm* (T) (3353040) 7.25 *Panbwydd Hysgus* (T) (11365610) (7292819) 8.00 *Meibion Glandwr* (T) (1999982) 8.30 *Neuddeg* (T) (18688017) 9.00 *Body Story* (416) (T) (9804098) 9.30 *Friends* (T) (8730125) 10.00 *The Young Person's Guide to Becoming a Rock Star* (919) (T) (750543) 10.45 *Bob and Margaret* (T) (7184703) 11.15 *Who's Line Is It Anyway?* (T) (7184949) 11.45 *Rising Star* (T) (7188820) 12.15am *Dispatches* (T) (7562321) 12.45 *The Comedy Lab* (7525292) 1.15 *Joe Public* (T) (7922250) 1.45 *Dived*

- CHANNEL 5**
- 5.55am *Sesame Street* (T) (9137901)
  - 7.00 *The Big Breakfast* (7733)
  - 9.00 *The Cosby Show* (T) (9564458)
  - 9.35 *That Lady* (1955) Historical romance. (6041291)
  - 11.30 *Powerhouse* (T) (4098)
  - 12.00 *Sesame Street* (57307)
  - 12.30pm *Bewitched* (T) (736331)
  - 1.00 *Judge Joe Brown* (8505765)
  - 1.35 *Roots to Success* Creating a water feature (T) (7594208)
  - 1.55 *The Left Hand of God* (1955) Drama set in post-war Christ, starring Humphrey Bogart as an American pilot who poses as a Catholic priest to evade capture by his former warlord employer. Directed by Edward Dmytryk (T) (87956678)
  - 3.30 *Collectors' Lot* (T) (1882)
  - 4.00 *Fifteen-to-One: The Big Winners* (T) (67)
  - 4.30 *Countdown* (T) (9640272)
  - 4.55 *Ricki Lake* (T) (7875727)
  - 5.30 *Put Rescue Roadshow* (T) (253)
  - 6.00 *Roseanne* (T) (1494)
  - 6.30 *Hollyoaks* Cindy deviously lands a date (T) (746)
  - 7.00 *Channel 4 News*: Weather (T) (933307)
  - 7.50 *Arcturians* White Knight and the Table of Longing Hearts, by Jan Erik Andersson (T) (456659)
  - 8.00 *Italian Kitchen* Two Winter-warming soups (T) (1036)

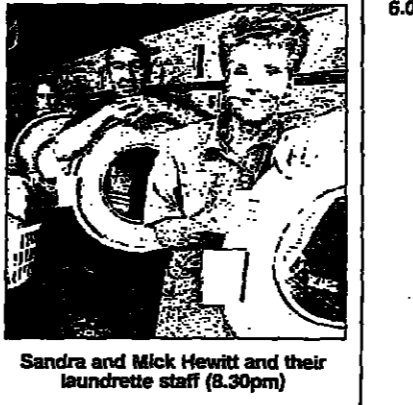
- CHANNEL 4**
- 6.00am *5 News* and Sport Headline round-up (8290104)
  - 7.00 *WideWorld* Paul P. Felton and society in Victorian Bristol (T) (6041291)
  - 7.30 *Milkshake!* (2620291)
  - 7.35 *Winnie's World*: (T) 5 News Update (8252494)
  - 8.00 *Havakkazoo* (T) (7863746)
  - 8.00 *Dappledown Farm*: 5 News Update (7652017)
  - 9.00 *The Antiques Hunter* in (T) (3298456)
  - 9.25 *Russell Grant's Postcards* (T) (4121814)
  - 9.30 *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (9387543)
  - 10.20 *Sunset Beach* Anne plans to kick Marnie (T) (9397235)
  - 11.10 *Leeza* (T) (8539475)
  - 12.00pm *5 News at Noon* (T) (7668833)
  - 12.30 *Family Affairs* (T) (T) 5 News Update (2287543)
  - 1.00 *The Bold and the Beautiful* Claire's boss reveals (T) (8040522)
  - 1.30 *Sons and Daughters* Kevin receives news from Lynne (2288614)
  - 2.00 *100 Per Cent* (1567494)
  - 2.30 *Good Afternoon* (2231369)
  - 3.30 *The Defector* (1966) An American scientist lands in danger when he is persuaded to undertake an espionage assignment in East Germany. Spy thriller, starring Montgomery Clift. Directed by Raoul Leff (T) (7689456)
  - 5.20 *The Roseanne Show* (958338)
  - 6.00 *100 Per Cent* (2428333)



Kristen Johnston stars as Sally, an unlikely looking actor (9pm)



The paramedics have to deal with the aftermath of a prison riot (9pm)



Sandra and Mick Hewitt and their laundrette staff (8.30pm)



Guilt-ridden Jack (Ken Farrington) decides to end it all (6.30pm)

- For further listings see Saturday's Vision
- SKY 1**
- 7.00am *The Simpsons* (95233) 7.30 *The City* (95233) 8.00 *The Simpsons* (95233) 8.30 *Guilty* (82949) 9.00 *Sally Jessy Raphael* (82949) 9.30 *Open House* (82949) 10.00 *Days of Our Lives* (82949) 10.30 *Sally Jessy Raphael* (82949) 11.00 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 11.30 *Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 12.00 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 12.30 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911)
- SKY MOVIE MAX**
- 6.00am *Address Unknown* (1988) (28189) 7.30 *A Holiday for Love* (1964) (28189) 8.00 *The Boy Who Swam the Boat* (1964) (28189) 8.30 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 9.00 *Address Unknown* (1988) (28189) 9.30 *A Holiday for Love* (1964) (28189) 10.00 *The Boy Who Swam the Boat* (1964) (28189) 10.30 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 11.00 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 11.30 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 12.00 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911) 12.30 *John Warner's 800 Ladies Down the Amazon* (1894) (8911) (8911)
- SKY CINEMA**
- 4.00pm *Captain Horatio Hornblower* (1951) (7883291) 5.00 *Blood on the Moon* (1948) (879253) 6.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 7.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 8.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 9.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 10.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 11.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 12.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 1.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 2.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 3.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 4.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 5.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 6.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 7.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 8.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 9.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 10.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 11.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 12.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 1.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 2.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 3.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 4.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 5.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 6.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 7.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 8.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 9.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 10.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 11.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291) 12.00 *Ben Hur* (1959) (7883291)
- SKY SPORTS 1**
- (TVM 1987) (2251923) 6.00 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 6.30 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 7.00 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 7.30 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 8.00 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 8.30 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 9.00 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 9.30 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 10.00 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 10.30 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 11.00 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 11.30 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 12.00 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403) 12.30 *On the Second Day of Christmas* (1997) (93403) (93403)
- SKY SPORTS 2**
- 7.00am *Aerobics* 7.30 *Sports Centre* 7.45 *Real Tennis* 8.00 *Real Tennis* 8.15 *Real Tennis* 8.30 *Real Tennis* 8.45 *Real Tennis* 9.00 *Real Tennis* 9.15 *Real Tennis* 9.30 *Real Tennis* 9.45 *Real Tennis* 10.00 *Real Tennis* 10.15 *Real Tennis* 10.30 *Real Tennis* 10.45 *Real Tennis* 11.00 *Real Tennis* 11.15 *Real Tennis* 11.30 *Real Tennis* 11.45 *Real Tennis* 12.00 *Real Tennis* 12.15 *Real Tennis* 12.30 *Real Tennis* 12.45 *Real Tennis* 1.00 *Real Tennis* 1.15 *Real Tennis* 1.30 *Real Tennis* 1.45 *Real Tennis* 2.00 *Real Tennis* 2.15 *Real Tennis* 2.30 *Real Tennis* 2.45 *Real Tennis* 3.00 *Real Tennis* 3.15 *Real Tennis* 3.30 *Real Tennis* 3.45 *Real Tennis* 4.00 *Real Tennis* 4.15 *Real Tennis* 4.30 *Real Tennis* 4.45 *Real Tennis* 5.00 *Real Tennis* 5.15 *Real Tennis* 5.30 *Real Tennis* 5.45 *Real Tennis* 6.00 *Real Tennis* 6.15 *Real Tennis* 6.30 *Real Tennis* 6.45 *Real Tennis* 7.00 *Real Tennis* 7.15 *Real Tennis* 7.30 *Real Tennis* 7.45 *Real Tennis* 8.00 *Real Tennis* 8.15 *Real Tennis* 8.30 *Real Tennis* 8.45 *Real Tennis* 9.00 *Real Tennis* 9.15 *Real Tennis* 9.30 *Real Tennis* 9.45 *Real Tennis* 10.00 *Real Tennis* 10.15 *Real Tennis* 10.30 *Real Tennis* 10.45 *Real Tennis* 11.00 *Real Tennis* 11.15 *Real Tennis* 11.30 *Real Tennis* 11.45 *Real Tennis* 12.00 *Real Tennis* 12.15 *Real Tennis* 12.3



SWIMMING 38

Palmer unconcerned at being passed over for national award

SPORT

RUGBY UNION 41

Cork prove far too strong for plucky Barcelona

THURSDAY DECEMBER 17 1998

Ronaldo stands in way of United dream



Ferguson: ambition

MANCHESTER United may have sneaked into the European Cup quarter-finals through the side door...

Ferguson holds the European Cup dear, to the point of obsession in recent years. It is perhaps the one factor above all else that prevents him taking up permanent residence at his holiday home in the south of France...

close to winning, the most prized of footballing honours. Inter provide not so much a hurdle but a daunting obstacle. They won the Uefa Cup last season, defeating Lazio 3-0 in Paris...

He has yet to recapture the sparkling form of last season, which many Italian observers have linked to his mystery illness before the World Cup final in July...

EUROPEAN DRAWS

EUROPEAN CUP: Quarter-finals: Real Madrid v Dynamo Kiev (Ukr); Manchester United v Internazionale; Juventus v Olympiakos (Gr); Bayern Munich v Kaiserslautern (Ger)...

UEFA CUP: Quarter-finals: Middlesbrough v Parma (It); Arsenal v Lazio v AS Roma...

United, the first of which is at Old Trafford, not due to be played until March, there is time for him to rediscover his beguiling touch.

It's a tough draw, but, in one sense, it's a great draw, because of Inter's reputation. Martin Edwards, the United chairman, said: "If you're going to win the cup, you have to be prepared to play the best teams at some stage..."

na midfield player, who Beckham petulantly kicked during the World Cup second-round match between the countries in Saint-Etienne...

Chelsea, England's only other European representative, have been drawn against Valerenga, of Norway, in the quarter-finals of the Cup Winners' Cup...

Olsen, who stood down from coaching the Norway national side after the World Cup finals in France. Although relegated from the Norwegian first division two years ago, they won the second division at the first attempt to return to the top flight.

They play in Oslo, in the 25,000-capacity Ullevaal national stadium, and have beaten Rapid Bucharest, of Romania, and Besiktas, of Turkey, to reach the closing stages. In the latter tie, they retrieved a 3-0 half-time deficit in the second leg to draw 3-3 and go through 4-3 on aggregate.

Chelsea, the cup-holders, play the first leg at Stamford Bridge on March 4, with the return in Oslo a fortnight later. The final — the last of its kind, with the competition due to be merged with the Uefa Cup next season — is to be held at Villa Park.

Sheepshanks linked with vacancy

FA must not miss chance to modernise

By OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

IT WAS a day of pep talks and fast manoeuvring at the Football Association yesterday. David Davies, the self-styled executive director, gathered the staff together, both at Lancaster Gate and at Wembley, and told them, in the best tradition, that they must keep their chins up...

less energetic or more directionless than they already were. If we spend much of our time mourning the passing of aspects of the English national game and its transference into the hands of many who see it as little more than a fashion accessory, a fancy fad to be indulged and then abandoned...

the now notorious loan to the Football Association of Wales, is not important. Without them the way ahead can only be brighter and the list of names being bandied about as their possible successors yesterday increased that impression...

Sheepshanks is not only young, personable, capable and enthusiastic — qualities manifestly lacking in the two men who have just been humiliated — but he also gained much admiration for the feisty way in which he championed the cause of the Football League in its successful bid to retain a place in the Uefa Cup as a reward for winning the League Cup.

Another leading candidate for the post of chairman is David Dein, the vice-chairman of Arsenal, but as the manoeuvring is only just beginning in the run-up to the crucial meeting of the 91-member FA council on January 4, a body that includes a Royal Navy Lieutenant-Commander...



Kelly is confronted by the media as he leaves home yesterday, the search for his successor having already begun. Photograph: Simon Brooke-Webb

and an RAF Group Captain, the point is that this sudden change in leadership must not be missed. The governors of the game had been falling further and further behind as the pace of change in football grew faster and faster throughout the 1990s. There have been a few...

John Bryant... 40 Race for succession... 40 Platt takes post... 40



Davies: ambitions

growth and he has allowed his attention to wander to higher concerns, a damaging factionalism has crept into his relations with the media, which is partly responsible for the avalanche of officialdom and between now and new elections next summer he can only strengthen his position. Yet as his ambitions have...

If England's sorry run of results in European championship qualifying ties continues against Poland at the end of March, Hoddle may find that his new overloads a lot less tolerant than their hapless predecessors.

Cut-price Aloisi sent to Coventry

JOHN ALOISI, the Portsmouth forward, is expected to complete a £650,000 move to Coventry City today.

The 22-year-old Australian may sign in time to be included in Gordon Strachan's squad for the match at home to Derby County on Saturday — but Coventry will be happy enough for him to put pen to paper, having had two recent proposed signings break down in the final stages.

Deals for Andreas Lund, from Molde, and Rune Lange, of Tromsø, both fell through as Coventry sought a replacement for Dion Dublin, who was sold to Aston Villa for £5.75 million seven weeks ago. Aloisi was rated at £2 million...

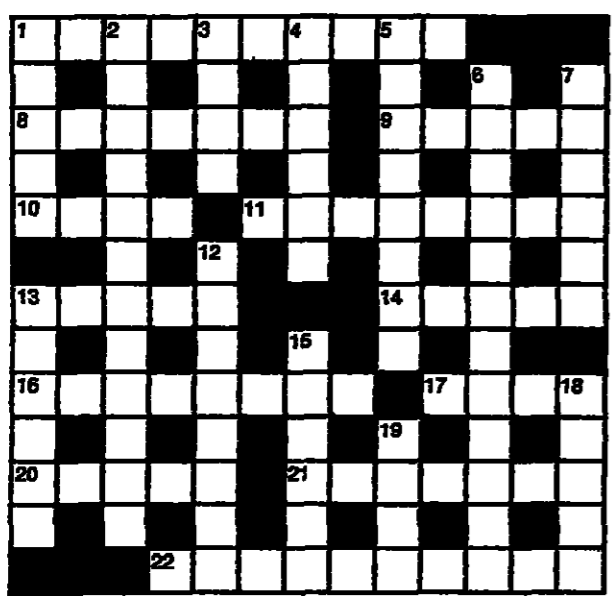
by Alan Ball, the Portsmouth manager, but the Nationwide League first division club, which is desperate to sell players to slash its £5 million over-

draft, allowed the 17-goal forward to leave for a cut-price fee. Portsmouth will receive only around £500,000, however, while Cremonese, Aloisi's...

former club in Italy, will receive the £200,000 that it is still owed by Portsmouth which Aloisi moved to England 18 months ago.

Fred Dineage, the television presenter, who has been a non-executive director at Portsmouth for the past three years, has resigned. The 56-year-old, who fronts the children's television show, How and regional programmes in the South, said: "I felt it was very difficult for me to continue in the circumstances..."

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1591

- ACROSS: 1 Get better (from illness) (10) 5 College food store (7) 9 Biscayne Bay resort (5) 10 Snopor (4) 11 Personal attraction (8) 13 Meeting place (5) 14 Old tax on produce (5) 16 Drink-offering (8) 17 One from Belgrade (4) 20 - Lescaut: Massenet, Puccini heroine (5) 21 Harsh: a grille (7) 22 In downcast way (10) DOWN: 1 Violently fanatical (5) 2 Personal broadcasting frequency (8,4) 3 One ennobled (4) 4 Pattern of beats (6) 5 Rashness (8) 6 Find necessary money (5,3,4) 7 Closing number (6) 12 Penalty imposed by judge (8) 13 A book: internal size (6) 15 (Mind) be baffled, horrified (6) 18 Evil, troublesome spirit: one over par (5) 19 Tense (4)

- SOLUTION TO NO 1590 ACROSS: 1 Hardy 4 Debauch 8 Bandwagon 9 Vet 10 Teak 11 Sequence 13 Take in 14 Limpet 17 Pellucid 19 Golf 22 Tug 23 Imbroglia 24 Retinue 25 Timid DOWN: 1 Habit 2 Ransack 3 Yawl 4 Dagger 5 Banausic 6 Coven 7 Entreat 12 Dilution 13 Tipster 15 Problem 16 Nimble 18 Light 20 Flood 21 Sort

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RAF US reveals dramatic... in raids